Female Mission Initiatives:
Black and White Women in Three Witwatersrand Churches, 1903 - 1939

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a historical study of the religious initiatives taken by two groups of women - white missionaries and African Christians - in the Anglican, Methodist and American Board Mission Churches on the Witwatersrand, South Africa, before the Second World War. It begins by setting the women in context. The nineteenth century background of women and the church is considered first. Then the recruitment of the female missionaries who worked in Johannesburg is examined and the effects of their social origins and training are explored. In the broad characterisation of the African women of Johannesburg which follows, particular stress is laid on the three main spheres of employment open to them, namely domestic service, beer-brewing and laundry work. The second part of the thesis looks at the important prayer unions founded and run by black women, sometimes with missionary help. In all three missions, African women showed great enthusiasm for public prayer and revivalist preaching. Members were also anxious to preserve the premarital chastity of their daughters. Other common concerns were the wearing of uniforms, fund-raising and campaigning for total abstinence from liquor. The individual history of each church association is outlined first, then the emphases which united them are analysed and accounted for. The last part of the thesis concentrates on three particular areas where white female missionaries were active. They set up hostels for servants and provided housewifery training. Sunday schools and a Christian youth movement for girls were frequently under female supervision. Anglican women pioneered two 'settlement houses' in African townships. The class and racial tensions reflected in all three endeavours are highlighted. A brief epilogue sketches the fate of both types of female mission initiatives.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the outset I must thank Dr. Shula Marks, who first helped me to see South African history in a new light and later drew my attention to the Ekutuleni Papers as the possible nucleus of a research topic. Her unfailing encouragement and guidance as supervisor of this thesis have been much valued. I am also indebted to Professor Richard Gray for introducing me some years ago to the study of Christianity in Africa. He kindly provided several helpful suggestions in the earlier stages of this work. As an undergraduate at the University of Cape Town, my enthusiasm for history was fanned by the late Marie Maud, to whose stimulating teaching and personal interest in her students I should like to pay warm tribute. The Albow Scholarship from UCT, a Winifred Cullis Grant from the International Federation of University Women, and grants from the School of Oriental and African Studies and the Central Research Fund of London University provided financial assistance which I gratefully acknowledge. It has been a pleasure getting to know other researchers interested in women in South Africa. I have particularly appreciated the friendship and intellectual stimulus given by Julia Wells and Elaine Unterhalter. Finally, this thesis would not have been completed without two important people to whom special thanks are due. Kate Zebiri has been a tranquil and highly efficient typist, while my husband, Rob, has provided constant cheer and moral support.

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes and text:

ABC	American Board Collection
ABM	American Board Mission
BW	Bantu World
CIAS	Centre of International and Area Studies, University of London
CPSA	(Archives of) Church of the Province of South Africa
CWW	(Papers of) Committee of Women's Work
FF	Foreign Field
ICS	Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London
IMC	(Papers of) International Missionary Council
MF	Mission Field
MMS	(Archives of) Methodist Missionary Society
RJC	Rheinallt Jones Collection
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
TM	Transvaal Methodist
USPG	(Archives of) United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
Wits	University of the Witwatersrand
WMDT	Wesleyan Methodist Church Directory of the Transvaal
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society
WUL	Witwatersrand University Library
WW	Women's Work

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the religious initiatives taken by women in three mission churches on the Witwatersrand - Anglican, Methodist and American Board - in the period between the Anglo-Boer War and the Second World War. Twentieth century mission history has thus far received scant scholarly attention in South Africa, even though many more Africans were to be found in mission than in independent churches.[1] The brief denominational accounts for the Reef or the Transvaal have little space for women.[2] Besides, focusing only on one church is particularly hard to justify on the Witwatersrand which, because of its strategic position and large population, soon attracted most missionary societies: there were fourteen at work there by 1912 and twenty-six by 1923. I have chosen the three most prominent, since what united them, both in the work of their women missionaries and the religious associations of their black women converts, was far more significant than what divided them.[3]

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1 G. B. A. Gerdener, Recent Developments in the South African Mission Field (Cape Town, 1958), provides only a superficial survey: 137-42 covers the Rand. 32.4per cent of the African population belonged to mission churches in 1936 and 46.4 per cent in 1960, compared with 16.5 and 20.1 per cent respectively for African independent churches; M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.), The Oxford History of South Africa, vol. II (Oxford, 1971), 475. Anthropological studies of contemporary urban African Christians have also looked only at independent churches, for example in Johannesburg and East London. See A. Dubb, Community of the Saved (Johannesburg, 1976); M. West, Bishops and Prophets in a Black City (Cape Town, 1975).

2 J. A. I. Agar-Hamilton, A Transvaal Jubilee (London, 1928); G. Mears, The Witwatersrand Methodist Mission (Cape Town, 1956), 69-74; W. J. G. Mears, Methodism in the Transvaal. An Outline (Cape Town, 1972), 13. An earlier thesis of mine paid some attention to 'women's work' in one church. See D. L. Bates, 'Anglican Missionaries and Africans on the Witwatersrand, 1903-1939' (MA, SOAS, 1973).

3 Report of the Proceedings of the Fourth General Missionary Conference of South Africa (Cape Town, 1912), 66; Gerdener, Recent Developments,

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A number of anthropological and religious studies have commented on the numerical importance and zeal of female African church members in South Africa, who find a spiritual outlet denied them in male-dominated pre-Christian society.[4] Yet all too often the importance accorded to churchwomen in isolated statements is paradoxically negated by the actual coverage they receive in the body of the text. Nor has there been any scholarly exploration of the origins and growth of black women's strong associational solidarity in the prayer unions known as manyanos.[5] Thus, Hewson describes 'organized Women's Work' as 'one of the greatest gifts of God to the Methodist Church during the past half-century', then devotes four short paragraphs to the topic. Pauw's latest work describes manyanos as 'the heartbeat of many a local church' but still gives them only four pages. Several reasons may be suggested for this brevity. The women comprise the led rather than the leaders (at least ostensibly) in most congregations, which makes them, as so often in the past, less visible. White male researchers have found it difficult to enter the world of African women's organisations. Sundkler, for instance, while describing the church as 'a

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138. In the mid-thirties, the Methodists claimed 9,139 Reef African members and the Anglicans 7,404; with their large numbers of buildings, ordained black clergy, and school pupils, they outweighed all other churches in importance. See R. E. Phillips, The Bantu in the City (Lovedale, 1938), 252-3. The ABM was numerically small but its leaders, particularly the Bridgmans and the Phillipses, had a social influence and prominence far beyond denominational boundaries.

4 B. A. Pauw, Religion in a Tswana Chiefdom (London, 1960), 86; B. G. M. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets in South Africa (2nd ed. London, 1961), 141; J. Comaroff, 'Barolong Cosmology: A Study of Religious Pluralism in a Tswana Town' (PhD, London, 1974), passim. The same point is made for Zimbabwe in M. W. Murphree, Christianity and the Shona (London, 1969), 122-3.

5 Manyano, or 'union', comes from the Xhosa word ukumanyana, 'to join'. As it is the most widely known term for these associations, it will be used in this thesis as a shorthand term for them all, as well as, when capitalised, with specific reference to the Methodist unions which coined the word.

women's movement' which 'functioned as a Women's Lib., long before that term was invented', writes, 'For obvious reasons, my studies of Zionism... have had to concentrate on men'. Finally, the generally subordinate position of women has resulted in a de-emphasis of their contribution in the church.[6]

Mia Brandel-Syrier's study of Reef manyanos in the 1950's, Black Woman in Search of God, is the only book-length treatment of this important religious phenomenon. She perhaps somewhat extravagantly describes the manyanos as 'the oldest, largest and most enduring and cohesive not only of all African women's organizations, but of all African organizations in South Africa',[7] but does succeed in conveying their vitality and significance. Her style is non-academic, and all the more vivid and readable for that, on the whole, although her personal judgments are at times intrusive. The book provides many helpful insights and is invaluable in its documentation of the shared style of cathartic emotional lament found across the denominations of British and American origin, like the three of this thesis, as well as in independent churches of purely African origin. However, as a study by a sociologist of a notable contemporary phenomenon, it has inevitable deficiencies for historical purposes. There is little conception of the social and religious context in which these movements were born, for Brandel-Syrier could obtain only the haziest information on their beginnings.

Of two shorter published accounts of similar movements in Sierra Leone and the former Rhodesia, Steady's likewise lacks much historical dimension. She sees the separate women's sphere in the church as only reinforcing male

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6 L. A. Hewson, An Introduction to South African Methodists (Cape Town, 1950), 100; B. A. Pauw, Christianity and Xhosa Tradition (Cape Town, 1975), 93-6; B. G. M. Sundkler, Zulu Zion (London, 1976), 75, 79.

7 M. Brandel-Syrier, Black Woman in Search of God (London, 1962), 97.

domination, while acting as a kind of female trade union, fighting for marital fidelity and stability in the monogamous Christian social order, where wives are more financially dependent on husbands. Muzorewa alludes to the importance of ministers' wives and emotional revivalism in the association's foundation, which provides an interesting parallel with the Transvaal Methodist Manyano, and records the Rhodesian women's political activism in protest against the state's persecution of their church.[8]

Brandel-Syrier leaves two factors out of account in her condemnation of the closed world which the manyanos inhabited and their reluctance to mobilise their considerable power for political or community purposes. First, the distinctive revivalist pietistic ethos of these movements, which endured into the 1950's, is a pointer, I argue, to the kind of Christianity being propagated and finding an audience in South Africa at the turn of the century. Secondly, the apparent other-worldliness of the manyanos might well have more to tell us about state repression in the 1950's than about any inherent incompatibility between prayer and politics. Research now in progress on black women's political resistance earlier in this

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8 F. C. Steady, 'Protestant Women's Association in Freetown, Sierra Leone', in N. Hafkin and E. Bay, Women in Africa (Stanford, 1976); F. D. Muzorewa, 'Through Prayer to Action: the Rukwadzano Women of Rhodesia', in T. O. Ranger and J. Weller (eds.), Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa (London, 1975). R. G. Stuart, 'Christianity and the Chewa: The Anglican Case 1885-1950' (PhD, London, 1974), Ch. VII, provides a sensitive though rather general analysis of the Mothers' Union in Malawi. This was a small movement by comparison with South Africa, having only 527 members by 1951. E. M. Buckley, 'The History of the Mission Work of the British Methodist Church in Rhodesia from the 1890's to the 1940's: with particular reference to the role of African ministers and evangelists, and development of Education and Women's Work' (PhD, London, 1977), has a straightforward, factual account of the Manyano in Rhodesia. This is again largely 'from above' and 'outside' the movement, though I would not wish to suggest that exploration 'from below' and 'within' is easy.

century only underlines the necessity of a better historical grasp of these female religious organisations. Julia Wells has documented how an active Methodist Manyano member and the association's president were among the 'respectable' middle class Christian housewives who led the 1913 anti-pass demonstrations in Bloemfontein. Her description of the mobilisation of Potchefstroom women in 1929 for protest against residential permits is strikingly reminiscent of, and may well have drawn on, typical manyano patterns of group revivalism: the women gathered by singing in the streets of the location, 'moving from street to street until all the women had been collected' and their meetings would last virtually all night. The fascinating rural protest movement William Beinart has been uncovering in Herschel, also in the twenties, drew its strength from women who had come out of Methodist and Anglican church organisations.[9] Clearly, my research is but the beginning of the broader and deeper investigation needed of black women's response to Christianity over the last century and a half. While my main focus has been on the most important urban area in the early twentieth century, the smaller towns and above all, the countryside, merit equally urgent exploration.

Adrian Hastings has recently made perceptive general comments about both women church members and prayer which are pertinent to the argument in Part II of this thesis. He notes that female associations have provided a 'dynamic core' to church life more often than the indispensable catechists. To a large extent, the spirit of the manyanos, 'with their concentration

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9 J. Wells, 'Women's resistance to passes in Bloemfontein during the inter-war period', Africa Perspective, 15 (1980), 22, 24, and 'The Day the Town Stood Still: Women's Resistance in Potchefstroom 1912-1930', Wits History Workshop, Feb. 1981, 23; W. Beinart, personal communication.

upon the small praying community, the confession of problems and failings, their emotional even ecstatic prayer', was the spirit of the independent churches. He suggests that when mission church leadership, preoccupied with school management, scientific medicine and printing presses, strayed from the 'central axis' of prayer, 'the independent churches were able time and again to steal their clothes and grow very effectively as just this and little else: churches of prayer'. My point is that manyanos provide virtually an independent church of prayer for women within the mission churches. As Hastings notes further, in the independent churches the prayer is 'essentially liturgy, that is to say public prayer' contrasting with 'the rather rationalised and privatised patterns of prayer more characteristic of modern Protestantism'.[10]

As I point out below,[11] analysts of conversion in South Africa have not always been particularly sensitive to gender. However, there is now beginning to emerge a literature on African Christianity with just such a sensitivity to female circumstances and contribution. Its range is diverse. A study of the church's mishandling of the problem of the levirate in East Africa yields more interesting insights than might be expected from its very particular theme. Research on the Jamaa Catholic movement in Zaire, with its special focus on Mary's relationship with Christ and its elevation of conjugal love as the prototype of Christian love for others, has

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10 A. Hastings, A History of African Christianity 1950-1975 (Cambridge, 1979), 114-5, 265-6. G. Tasie and R. Gray, 'Introduction', in E. Fashole-Luke et al (eds.), Christianity in Independent Africa (London, 1978), 11-12, virtually echo the point in asserting that manyanos shared with what they call 'charismatic and prophetic churches' the lack of any daunting barrier of alien technology, great buildings or professional programmes.

11 See Ch. 1, section c).

underscored symbolically and demonstrated in practice 'the unique and indispensable spiritual role that the woman plays'. A collection of essays edited by Benetta Jules-Rosette not only looks at some traditional female religious roles but also at women in four independent churches; in the Jamaa; and finally, the only Protestant mission setting, in the East African Revival. What Catherine Robins says in introducing this last topic, could equally well be applied to the manyanos: 'Through their elaboration of ritual roles and their tolerance of expressive religious behaviour, indigenous religious movements have created an outlet for women largely absent from the more orthodox mission setting.' Jules-Rosette alludes to an interesting dichotomy of spiritual responsibilities, in all the indigenous movements in the volume, between 'political and ceremonial authority', coinciding with male and female sexes. To call the women's authority 'ceremonial', though, does not fully capture its non-formal, spontaneous, charismatic quality. In the West African independent church discussed by Breidenbach, healing through spirit possession on Fridays is dominated by women, while chapel on Sundays, needing literacy for preaching and teaching, is dominated by men. This is highly reminiscent of the division in South African black churches between Thursday, the women's day for praying and preaching, and Sunday, which is the minister's.[12]

Ranger comments of missionary history that 'its treatment of missionaries

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12 M. C. Kirwen, African Widows (New York, 1979); W. de Craemer, The Jamaa and the Church (Oxford, 1977), 60; B. Jules-Rosette (ed.), The New Religions of Africa (New Jersey, 1979), 84, also C. Robins, 'Conversion, Life Crises, and Stability among Women in the East African Revival' and P. Breidenbach, 'The Woman on the Beach and the Man in the Bush: Leadership and Adepthood in the Twelve Apostles Movement of Ghana'.

and of Christianity was too narrowly "religious"; its treatment of African response was not "religious" enough.'[13] Whereas my analysis of the manyanos aims to be both more 'religious' and more historical than Brandel-Syrier's, I have tried to put the discussion of the work of Reef women missionaries in Part III in a broader social and political context. None of the themes chosen has received detailed consideration before. A recent laudatory study of Dorothy Maud, the most notable Johannesburg Anglican female missionary of the inter-war decades, made careful use of many of the sources which I consulted for Chapter 8. However, insufficient familiarity on the author's part with South African history as a whole, along with the explicit biographical focus, has resulted in a narrowly conceived, understandably uncritical, chronological account of one individual's life. The Helping Hand Club and Wayfarers, central to Chapters 6 and 7, were known and mentioned in passing as part of the multiplicity of missionary and liberal activities contemporaneous with the renowned Bantu Men's Social Centre, but have also not hitherto been explored in depth.[14]

The Club and the GWA, like the other welfare and youth efforts supervised by women missionaries, derive part of their historical relevance from the debate about inter-war liberalism in South Africa. Researchers have stressed the desire of both capital and white liberals to defuse the militance of the 1917-20 Reef strikes and anti-pass demonstrations, and restabilise the situation by coopting (notably through the Joint Councils) the black petty bourgeoisie which had been radicalised in the course of

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13 'Introduction', Ranger and Weller, Themes, 4.

14 A. Ashley, Peace-Making in South Africa. The Life and Work of Dorothy Maud (Bognor Regis, 1980). On the BMSC particularly, see T. Couzens, 'The Social Ethos of Black Writing in South Africa 1920-1950', in C. Heywood (ed.), Aspects of South African Literature (London, 1976), 66-81.

these momentous events.[15] The ferment and tensions of the post-war years provide a necessary backdrop for this part of the thesis, for the concern for 'inter-racial cooperation' and 'peace-making' which female missionaries shared with males, arose within this milieu. A pivotal individual was the non-missionary Edith Rheinallt Jones, wife of the leading figure in the Joint Councils and later South African Institute of Race Relations. She was Wayfarer President 1925-44 and also President of the Helping Hand Club from 1933.[16]

Aside from research on religion in Africa or the impact of Christian liberals on African politics and culture, the great burgeoning of feminist historiography in the past decade has made it clear that there is also a history of women in South Africa to which my research makes a contribution. 'Somehow, when women are not intentionally observed, their roles are unnoticed or misinterpreted', comments a female anthropologist. Yet, as another points out, there is also the paradox that 'while on the one hand

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15 See particularly papers by P. L. Bonner, 'The 1920 Black Mineworkers' Strike: A Preliminary Account', in B. Bozzoli (ed.), Labour, Townships and Protest (Johannesburg, 1979), and 'The Transvaal Native Congress 1917-1920: the radicalisation of the Black Petty Bourgeoisie on the Rand', University of London, Centre of International and Area Studies (CIAS), Conference on The Making of Modern South Africa, Jan. 1980; also B. Willan, 'Sol Plaatje, De Beers and an Old Tram Shed: Class Relations and Social Control in a South African Town, 1918-1919', JSAS, 4, 2 (1978), and P. Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa. The African National Congress 1912-1952 (London, 1970), Chs. IV, VIII.

16 E. H. Brookes, R.J. (Johannesburg, 1953), and 'J. D. & Edith Rheinallt Jones', in R. M. de Villiers (eds.), Better Than They Knew (Cape Town, 1972); J. W. Horton, 'South Africa's Joint Councils: Black-White Co-operation between the two World Wars', South African Historical Journal, 4 (1972); M. Legassick, 'The Rise of Modern South African Liberalism: its Assumptions and its Social Base', ICS seminar paper, Ideology and Social Structure in 20th Century South Africa, 1973; B. Hirson, 'Tuskegee, the Joint Councils, and the All African Convention', ICS seminar paper, Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries, May 1979.

the women's movement rejects the ideological claim that "anatomy is destiny", on the other, academic writings assume that "anatomy is a sociological category": that one can have an "anthropology of women", or that there is a "problem of women".'[17] My separating out of 'women' for special analysis is not meant to imply that they are a homogeneous group, experiencing subordination in identical ways. Nor can we make sense of their experience in isolation from that of men or the history of the total society. But, similarly, in leaving women out of account, our understanding of the history of the society as a whole is impoverished. In the church, there is a clear separation of spheres by sex and the elevation of males to ministry. A particular focus on women echoes the setting apart of 'women's work' for white female missionaries and the secondary and non-ministerial role allotted to black women Christians.

The questions and insights of these recent researchers have helped illuminate much of my material. Of the growing number of cross-cultural anthropological anthologies, the two edited by Rosaldo and Lamphere, and Reiter, remain probably the best. A London group produced a valuable collection on female solidarity, pointing out how it may reinforce women's oppression by policing female domestic roles or asserting class privilege. Edholm, Harris and Young have tried to draw out the varied meanings in the concepts of production and reproduction, much bandied about in research using Marxist categories, and they also explore the notion of the sexual division of labour. As regards Africa itself, a collection of essays edited by Hafkin and Bay sought to show women in non-domestic roles and other than as primarily sexual beings, also taking account of social

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17 D. Pellow, 'Recent Studies on African Women', African Studies Review, XX, 1 (1977), 119; Introduction to P. Caplan and J. M. Bujra, Women United, Women Divided. Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Female Solidarity (London, 1979), 18.

change. West and East Africa, predictably, provided the case studies. Nici Nelson's research on women in Nairobi provides many fascinating parallels with female beer-brewers of Johannesburg a half century before. Like the Kenyans, Johannesburg women gained a new independence from husbands, brothers and fathers in the city but continued to be dependent on males for economic support as customers, lovers and 'town-husbands', while developing important networks with other women for help with childcare and throughout the brewing operation.[18]

Research in Britain on the ideology of female domesticity and the creation of the housewife in the nineteenth century has helped to clarify middle class missionary assumptions about the religious wife's role in the home. Indeed, there was a domestic slant to the entire range of activities in which women missionaries were involved. Also highly relevant to black family life in Johannesburg is Anna Davin's illustration of the dependence of the mid-Victorian working class family on an economic contribution from every member but the smallest. Her work on the imperial dimension to debates on the subject of motherhood from the turn of the century, links up with Reef initiatives in maternal and infant medical care.[19]

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18 M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (eds.), Woman, Culture, and Society (Stanford, 1974); R. Reiter (ed.), Towards an Anthropology of Women (New York, 1975); Caplan and Bujra, Women, 15; F. Edholm, O. Harris and K. Young, 'Conceptualising Women', Critique of Anthropology, 9 & 10 (1977); Hafkin and Bay, Women; N. Nelson, 'Dependence and Independence: Female Household Heads in Mathare Valley, A Squatter Community in Nairobi, Kenya' (PhD, University of London, 1978), and '"Women must help each other": the operation of personal networks among Buzaa beer brewers in Mathare Valley, Kenya', in Caplan and Bujra, Women. An American anthology with some helpful discussion of the pitfalls of 'women's history' is B. A. Carroll (ed.), Liberating Women's History (Urbana, 1976).

19 A. Oakley, Housewife (Harmondsworth, 1976), Chs. 2, 3; S. Alexander, 'Women's Work in Nineteenth-Century London; A Study of the Years 1820-50', in J. Mitchell and A. Oakley (eds.), The Rights and Wrongs of Women (Harmondsworth, 1976), 61; C. Hall, 'The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology', in S. Burman (ed.), Fit Work for Women

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Research on women in South African history has also been making strides.[20] It will long be indebted to Cherryl Walker's pioneering opening up of the whole field in her studies of female political movements in this century: white women's campaign for the vote and the efforts of black women, along with those of other races, in the Federation of South African Women.[21] Julia Wells has looked more closely at black women's urbanisation and the relative freedom of movement, and freedom to resist politically, won for women through struggle against the pass laws. She links the clamp down from the 1950's partly with the Nationalist Party victory of 1948. The new government drew most of its support from white farmers and industrial workers. These groups had always viewed African women as labour units, whose urban influx must be strictly regulated. They did not see the relevance for black women of a domestic ideology which considered that women's place was in the home. Wells also points up the contrast with Johannesburg of the experience of women in smaller Highveld towns like Bloemfontein and Potchefstroom, with their settled African families and more even sex ratios.[22]

(London, 1979); A. Davin, 'The working-class family: co-operating to survive in early industrialisation', ICS African History Seminar paper, Nov. 1980, and 'Imperialism and Motherhood', History Workshop, 5 (1978).

20 H. J. Simons, African Women. Their Legal Status in South Africa (London, 1968), was the first scholarly probe of this topic, but its overriding concern was with African customary law; H. Bernstein, For their Triumphs and for their Tears (rev. ed. London, 1978), provides a valuable brief survey, but the historical perspective is limited to post-World War II.

21 C. J. Walker, 'Women in Twentieth Century South African Politics: The Federation of South African Women, its Roots, Growth and Decline' (MA, University of Cape Town, 1978) and The Women's Suffrage Movement in South Africa (Cape Town, 1979).

22 J. Wells, 'Passes and Bypasses: Freedom of Movement for African Women under the Urban Areas Act of South Africa', to be published in a collection on women and law in Africa, ed. by M. Wright et al; also 'Bloemfontein', 'Potchefstroom' and her forthcoming PhD thesis from Columbia University.

There are two historical chapters in Jacklyn Cock's absorbing portrayal of female domestic servants, who suffer a triple exploitation of race, class and sex as Africans, workers and women. Her work has particular bearing on my discussion of domestic service and of female education. A further contribution has been made through special issues of journals on women and the publishing by Africa Perspective of two Honours dissertations on women. A small London group, to which I belong, has begun producing a bulletin as part of this broader attempt by the revisionist history of South Africa to take account of gender as well as class in its displacement of the old analytical dominance of racial categories.[23] This bulletin alludes to much of the key theoretical literature in the proliferation of analyses with a 'Marxist feminist' stance.[24] As this debate is still very much evolving, I can do no more than acknowledge its existence and the valuable stimulus which it provided in the closing stages of my work.

Finally, I have benefited from the considerable impetus to South African urban social history which has emanated primarily from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. I participated in the first History Workshop there in February 1978, which looked at 'The Witwatersrand: Labour, Townships and Patterns of Protest'. The second, in February this year, focused on 'Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Response'. Of the contributions to these conferences, Proctor's excellent essay and Koch's paper are

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23 J. Cock, Maids & Madams (Johannesburg, 1980); South African Labour Bulletin, 2, 4 (1975); Africa Perspective, 11 (1979), 15 (1980); J. Yawitch, Black Women in South Africa: Capitalism, Employment and Reproduction, and C. Kros, Urban African Women's Organisations 1939-1956, Africa Perspective Dissertations Nos. 2 and 3 (Johannesburg, 1980); Women in South African History, 1 (Jan. 1981).

24 And see also M. Barrett, Women's Oppression Today: Problems in Marxist Feminist Analysis (London, 1980).

particularly notable for their stress on African women's role in Johannesburg's Western Areas and the Doornfontein yards. The Workshops' interest in working class and petty bourgeois culture in the black townships, has also helped inform my work.[25] The Workshops have in turn been stimulated by the amazingly rich research on a whole range of aspects of Johannesburg's history before the First World War, carried out by Charles van Onselen. This was part of London University's Centre of International and Area Studies project on Town and Countryside in South Africa. The project included a fortnightly seminar and also led to a conference, some of the papers from which are referred to in the body of the thesis. Van Onselen's investigation of domestic service was of greatest relevance to my research.[26]

This latest research on Witwatersrand history only serves to underline what was obviously a basic obstacle for my study - the very meagre literature on the living conditions of ordinary people in South Africa's major urban centre. During the period analysed in this thesis, the Witwatersrand moved from being a predominantly gold mining area, 'the crucible of South African capitalism',[27] to an important centre for manufacturing industry as well. Class differentiation among Africans developed fastest there. Yet historical investigation of female working class and middle class religious activity cannot proceed, as in Britain, within a social and economic context which has already been fairly well mapped out.

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25 A. Proctor, 'Class Struggle, Segregation and the City: A History of Sophiatown, 1905-1940', in Bozzoli, Labour; E. Koch, '"Without Visible Means of Subsistence": Slumyard Culture in Johannesburg, 1918-1940', Wits History Workshop, Feb. 1981.

26 C. van Onselen, 'The Witches of Suburbia: Domestic Service on the Witwatersrand 1890-1914', ICS unpub. seminar paper, The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries, March 1978 .

27 Bozzoli, Labour, 3.

Johannesburg's history was, even so, far more accessible than that of its eight satellite towns along the gold Reef (Randfontein, Krugersdorp and Roodepoort to the west, Germiston, Boksburg, Brakpan, Benoni and Springs to the east). I therefore concentrated on Johannesburg itself in my consideration in Chapter 3 of the social and economic setting of African women on the Witwatersrand. I have seen only two (disappointing) studies of other Rand townships, but more will doubtless issue from the University in due course.[28] As Johannesburg provided the major proportion, 57 per cent, of black women on the Reef in 1936, it seemed justified to limit my analysis in this way.[29] There were further grounds in the fact that the women missionaries analysed in this study lived almost without exception in Johannesburg itself, travelling out to more distant congregations of what was conceived of in all three churches as a Witwatersrand-wide mission to Africans. (Hence, one could not abandon the broader reference.)

Although the growing literature on women, religion and South African working class social history has fed into the approach and informed the context of my research, the contribution of this thesis derives largely from hitherto untapped primary sources. In Chapter 1, I look at the nineteenth century background of women in Protestant churches. The published literature employed is, despite its deficiencies, much more informative on white women than black, though I have also used three theses, one now published, on conversion to mission Christianity in South Africa.

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28 F. J. Nöthling, 'Die Vestiging van die nie-blankes in Brakpan 1888-1930', Kleio, V, 1 (1973), and D. Humphriss and D. G. Thomas, Benoni Son of my Sorrow (Benoni, 1968). A good starting point would be the detailed comparison of respective populations, administration and provision of housing, health and education, recreation and beer, in City of Johannesburg, Survey of Reef Locations and those of Evaton, Meyerton, Nigel, Pretoria, Vereeniging (Johannesburg, 1939).

29 60,992 of 106,977 females: Union of South Africa, Sixth Census...1936, vol. IX (Pretoria, 1942), xiii. Thus some 40 per cent were scattered among eight other urban areas, all with broadly similar employment opportunities.

The analysis in Chapter 2 of women missionary candidates is the first detailed study of such women in South Africa and also the first I know of to use the Dossiers on missionaries held at the USPG. These are particularly rich, containing not only each woman's application form but also usually testimonials, interview and training home reports, and correspondence. The much smaller ABM sample was likewise excellently documented, while for Methodist women, and indeed their husbands too, no such papers could be traced in either Britain or South Africa. The depiction of African women's employment in Johannesburg in Chapter 3 rests partly on sources used by researchers in allied topics: printed as well as unpublished municipal reports, government commissions, contemporary social research. I also found the women's pages of the black newspapers in the 1930's enlightening and such unpublished evidence to the 1930-32 Native Economic Commission as is available. Detailed consultation of white Johannesburg newspapers over the forty year period was not feasible or warranted, although Van Onselen has exploited these very successfully.

Parts II and III of the thesis rest primarily on the archives of the three missions selected. Although the Methodists were the most spiritually alive and organisationally strong as regards their Manyano, their records in Britain are disappointing by comparison with those of the other two. Boxes of correspondence from the Transvaal District Chairman were combed at length, but financial matters and work among whites predominated. A file of correspondence on 'Women's Work' was helpful for the 1920's, while the periodical Foreign Field was particularly valuable for the first decade of the Manyano, which is hardly documented elsewhere. The minute Primitive Methodist Church, by contrast, which united with the Wesleyans in 1931, has excellent records in correspondence and quarterly reports,

and yielded the precious letter describing a series of revival services in 1919. The Methodist Archive in the Cory Library at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, had little correspondence but some excellent printed sources. The monthly Transvaal Methodist recorded church activities for two decades; the church's annual Directory furnished Manyano membership figures and reports on Sunday school work in the 1920's. A small collection of Manyano conference programmes and membership returns was also a welcome find. Synod Minutes for the 1930's were tracked down to the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg, while the renowned Albert Street Methodist Church dug out the Minute Book and other records of the defunct Native Girls' Hostel. Attempts to locate local Manyano records proved abortive, but this was probably not a very great loss as they would have been largely registers and records of dues, providing little guide to the nature of weekly meetings. The printed fiftieth anniversary pamphlet put together by Manyano officials, on the other hand, proved vital.

Apart from the Dossiers already mentioned, the Anglican USPG had copious, very informative records of women's work. Correspondence was first to be found in the papers of the Committee of Women's Work; most annual reports from female missionaries were filed, like the men's, in the E Series, while some of the episcopal correspondence in the D Series also proved relevant. Again, the monthly periodical, The Mission Field, was frequently rewarding. The Church of the Province of South Africa (to give the Anglicans their official title there) also has good archives housed in Johannesburg, although the wide variety of diocesan records consulted were not as consistently informative about women as were periodicals like the SWM Journal and The Watchman. Detailed data on the manyano was lacking, though the Mothers' Union headquarters in Johannesburg and London furnished some helpful items. The diocesan headquarters could not locate the Anglican Hostel's records, but the Johannesburg Public Library held one annual report

as well as incomplete runs of Ekutuleni and Helping Hand Club reports. For Chapter 8, I relied most heavily on the correspondence, reports, logbooks, pamphlets and recorded reminiscences put together in relation to Ekutuleni and its Pretoria offshoot by the founder of the latter, Clare Lawrance.

The American Board Mission Archives in Boston are well organised and extensive, although the stress on numerical details sometimes left one in ignorance of the quality and content of the Christian encounter. By contrast with the initiatives of the white female missionaries, the African women's association in Johannesburg was rather sparsely documented. Here, another jubilee publication by African women members provided invaluable insights. I was also delighted to track down a hoard of Helping Hand Club records in private hands (with the last President), though it was not possible within the narrow confines of Chapter 6, to do full justice to its rich detail - minutes of the Club committee, annual reports, the Matron's monthly reports, records of the employment registry and the domestic science training school, and schedules of hostel residents.

The Girl Wayfarers' Association, discussed in Chapter 7, is of course mentioned in mission reports, but valuable additional material came from the Archives of the International Missionary Council as well as the voluminous correspondence of GWA President, Mrs. Jones, who clearly merits a biography. The correspondence of Edith Jones was still being sorted when I used it.

Interviews with some thirty individuals, mostly in South Africa and largely church women, provided some of the most interesting and enjoyable times of research. Since visiting people in Soweto was not feasible, it took time to set up meetings in town with African women active in church organisations in the twenties and thirties. Their fluency in English

meant that my lack of command of a vernacular was little barrier, and conversation was free and lively. More interviewing would have been possible, and well worth while, on a longer research trip than the six months I had in 1977-8. Clearly, further oral research is desirable for a fuller grasp of the meaning of manyanos for the ordinary members, and the way local branches operated.

Yet even within these limitations as to sources, it has been possible to make a substantial start in the historical reconstruction of African women's Christian endeavours on the Reef in the early twentieth century. Looking at white females too was essential to this attempt, even setting aside for the moment the centrality of mission women to inter-racial cooperation involving black children. Without the mission records, much of the 'texture' of the early history of the prayer unions would be irrecoverable. But what took me by surprise in the course of research was the extent to which the two groups of women on the Reef were in fact on different tracks. The links between the women were strongest, though, in the period chosen. Before the South African War, there were no women missionaries to speak of at work on the Witwatersrand. After the Second World War, from which time mission records are closed to researchers anyhow, the already substantial independence of black women's prayer unions increased further. Thus the years covered by this thesis provide the best opportunity for examining the relationship between white and black women in the leading Witwatersrand mission churches.

PART I

INTRODUCING THE WOMEN

The role of women in the church derives not simply from biblical prescriptions but also from the position of women in the social, economic and intellectual life of the society as a whole. With this in mind, this part of the thesis first explores the nineteenth century background as regards women and Protestant Christianity in both the missionary home bases and South Africa. The focus then shifts to the missionary women who came to work in Johannesburg. I attempt a profile of them as a group and discuss some of the implications for the church of their social origins and training. Finally, attention turns to the African women living in Johannesburg, who were initially perceived as the appropriate field for white female mission activity. What brought them to the Reef and how they supported themselves there provides a necessary prelude to the exploration of their Christianity in Part II.

CHAPTER 1

FEMALE FOREBEARS

Although the single women and the ministers' wives who came to Johannesburg after the Boer War were the main missionary trail-blazers of their sex on the Reef, they were not the first to undertake such work among African women in South Africa; nor, by and large, was their encounter with black women on the Witwatersrand the first contact those women had had with the Christian Gospel. By 1900, South Africa was witnessing its third generation of missionary wives, and at least the second of African female converts in some areas, while the first substantial collection of single lady missionaries had been in the field a quarter of a century. How was it that women came to work as missionaries in nineteenth century South Africa, from what status in the churches back home did they proceed, and under what circumstances were African women first brought into the church? This chapter sets out to answer these questions in order to put in context the activities of white and black Christian women in Johannesburg, so that the contrasts and continuities of the situation on the Reef may be more clearly discerned and more intelligible.

a) Protestant Churchwomen in England and America in the Nineteenth Century

The early and mid-nineteenth century saw an expansion of Christian activity by Protestant women in the West that was without precedent. This upsurge of 'women's work' for the church pre-dated by two or three decades the appearance of the doctrine that 'religion is for women', but probably contributed to its formulation. By the 1890's, females confirmed in the Church of England well exceeded males and there were frequent laments that women outnumbered grown men in church.[1] One American author even suggests

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1 See O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, Part II (London, 1970), 222-3.

that a 'feminization' of religion was taking place in that country. Not only did women become increasingly prominent as church members and in revivals and voluntary Christian societies, but Christianity itself became more domesticated and accommodating, emphasising supposed feminine qualities for its members of submissiveness and emotional self-immolation, and even feminizing the divine nature to some extent. The self-abnegation and obedience to Christ which women vowed in hymn and prayer were, she avers, only the flip-side of the docility which their husbands wanted from them.[2]

It is important to grasp what was new about the role of women in nineteenth-century Protestantism. There were two facets to the phenomenon: the public activity, often corporate, of large numbers of unpaid women, many of them married, in all sorts of 'works of mercy' and parochial pastoral duties; and the performance of frequently very similar work by a much smaller number of single women supported by church funds and with an implicit or explicit lifelong dedication. All this novelty notwithstanding, the churches remained, as they had been for nearly two thousand years, dominated by male clergy.

Arguably, the Reformation was 'logically committed to the ministry of women'.[3] Effectively, it had narrowed Protestant women's options to the single religious vocation of marriage and fostering Christian devotion within the domestic family circle.[4] Prior to that, medieval nunneries had offered

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2 B. Welter, 'The Feminization of American Religion: 1800-1860', in M. S. Hartman and L. Banner (eds.), Clio's Consciousness Raised: New Perspectives on the History of Women (New York, 1974), 138-9, 144. Religion was the core of the four cardinal female virtures of 'piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity' which Welter explores in 'The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860', The American Quarterly, XVII, 2 (Summer, 1966).

3 A. Maude Royden, The Church and Woman (London, 1924), 80.

4 K. Bliss, The Service and Status of Women in the Churches (London, 1952), 26.

upper class women the respect of society in their unmarried state and opportunities for spiritual deepening, educational advance and administrative responsibilities.[5] Even earlier, there had developed by the fourth century, especially in the Eastern Church, a kind of female pastoral assistant, the deaconess. She prepared women for and helped at their baptism, visited them when sick, and performed general acts of charity.[6] These three models - the pious wife, the nun, and the deaconess - were the relevant ones for nineteenth century Protestantism. What will be traced briefly below is why and how the latter two were revived at this particular time, and the first came to incorporate more public activity. All three were of great importance in helping to redefine more broadly the religious roles open to women, and all had repercussions on the mission field, especially as regards the opportunities open to single women.

The model of woman as prophet or preacher with something to say to the whole church, as opposed to something to teach women and children, remained a minority one throughout the century. Early English Wesleyanism had women preachers and the Primitive Methodists ordained women for some years.[7] In the 1860's a more decorous group of middle class, sometimes married women enjoyed a period of prominence as public preachers to mostly indoor, mixed gatherings of the respectable. Challenging both 'the social convention that respectable women played no public role in mixed society' and 'Christian

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5 E. E. Power, Medieval Women (Cambridge, 1975), 89, 99.

6 G. H. Tavard, Woman in Christian Tradition (Notre Dame, 1973), 94-5; M. B. Crook, Women and Religion (Boston, 1964), 146-7; G. Harkness, Women in Church and Society (New York, 1972), 75; C. C. Ryrie, The Place of Women in the Church (New York, 1958), 85-144.

7 R. E. Davies, Methodism (London, 1963), 62, 162.

teaching that women should be silent in the church',[8] their short-lived ministry was a fruit not of feminism but of the revival which began in 1859. It was always those Christians who de-emphasised hierarchy, clergy and sacraments who found most room for spontaneous female ministry and even for its more routinised version, actual ordination. After the Methodists abandoned female ministry, three denominations in particular kept the idea alive: the Salvation Army, the Quakers and the Unitarians.[9]

While clearly contributing to popular acceptance of wider responsibilities for Christian women, these churches were outside mainstream nineteenth century Protestantism (the Unitarians had a tinge of heresy), and numerically small. For most Protestant women, the church remained uncompromisingly male in its ordained ministry and hierarchy, and anything women did was supplementary to the central, male work of ministering Word and sacraments.[10]

Hannah More, the early evangelical publicist, had laid down that 'Charity is the calling of a lady; the care of the poor is her profession'.[11] It was the industrial revolution in England and the concomitant growth of towns which really compelled Christian women to extend their religious vocation beyond the ever-important domestic sphere. Urban congestion accentuated social problems, so the town inevitably became the main arena

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8 O. Anderson, 'Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain: Some Reflexions on Feminism, Popular Religion and Social Change', Historical Journal, XII, 3 (1969), 469. Tavard, Woman, 218, claims it is all a question of the theology of the Spirit - ages and groups which admit women to prominence, are strongly charismatic.

9 See C. Bramwell-Booth, Catherine Booth (London, 1970) and B. Watson, A Hundred Years' War. The Salvation Army: 1865-1965 (London, 1964), 28-35; E. Isichei, Victorian Quakers (Oxford, 1970), 94-5, 107-9; Crook, Women, 235-7.

10 They were excluded from church management too: women were not eligible for Anglican Church councils until 1919. See B. Heeney, 'The Beginnings of Church Feminism: Women and the Councils of the Church of England 1897-1919', Journal of Ecclesiastical History (forthcoming).

11 Quoted in J. S. Howson, Deaconesses; or The Official Help of Women in Parochial Work and in Charitable Institutions (London, 1862), 192.

of charitable organisations. As social awareness and the guilt (and fear) of the middle and upper classes grew, and it became clear that the state was not going to give the assistance needed by the urban poor to stem the crisis in the cities, voluntary charities mushroomed.[12] But there were other inputs too. The married middle class woman's badge of respectability, her leisure, was increased from mid-century by the more plentiful supply of female domestic servants, enabling her the more to go about doing good. This filled personal psychological needs too. Voluntary church work became an acceptable substitute for a career for capable women. Indeed, to be acceptable, philanthropy virtually had to be amateur for the majority, especially wives, since 'to pay a woman to do charitable work meant that she ceased to be a lady and that the work itself was no longer done for the highest moral reasons'.[13]

Kathleen Heasman has charted the astonishing range of charitable societies, about three-quarters of the total number between 1850 and 1900, controlled by Evangelicals. There were large general missions in London's East End running Sunday schools, provident clubs and mothers' meetings; ragged schools; gospel temperance; rescue work among prostitutes; the provision of recreation and hostel accommodation for adolescents in town jobs; associations concerned with the blind, deaf, crippled and insane; work for prisoners, the sick and aged, soldiers and sailors. Most of the social work was done by a mighty army of middle class ladies, giving a day or so

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12 K. Heasman, Evangelicals in Action. An Appraisal of their Social Work in the Victorian Era (London, 1962), 1, 8-10.

13 M. Vicinus (ed.), Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age (Bloomington, 1972), xi; D. Crow, The Victorian Woman (London, 1971), 140; C. Hall, 'The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology' and A. Summers, 'A Home from Home - Women's Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century' in S. Burman (ed.), Fit Work for Women (London, 1979).

a week.[14] In America, starting in towns all over New England from 1800, religious women formed moral reform societies too, as well as the maternal associations which arose from their family responsibilities. Like women in England, their voluntary efforts came to include collecting money, distributing tracts, founding Sunday schools and societies for child welfare and to suppress vice.[15]

For the middle or upper class single woman with no chance of or wish for marriage, life in early Victorian times did not hold out dazzling prospects. For an exceptionally capable girl like Florence Nightingale, who was to be a pivotal figure in the evolution of sisterhoods in England, the church offered nothing to alleviate her frustrations:

> I would have given her my head, my hand, my heart. She would not have them...she told me to go back and do crochet in my mother's drawing room; or if I were tired of that, to marry...You may go to the Sunday School if you like it, she said. But she gave me no training even for that. She gave me neither work to do for her, nor education for it.

To the feminist realisation of the need to open up higher educational and employment opportunities to such women was added the powerful evidence of the 1851 census as to the half million surplus single women in England, which confirmed a long-standing belief that large numbers of middle class women were 'condemned by a marked demographic imbalance to a life of spinsterhood'. This prompted suggestions for their useful employment. The physical needs of the cities were linked with the personal needs of single women in proposals for the emulation of Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity and the new German deaconesses. The Evangelical Pastor Fliedner had in

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14 Heasman, Evangelicals, 23 and passim.

15 N. F. Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood. 'Woman's Sphere' in New England 1780-1835 (New Haven, 1977), Ch. 4; C. S. Rosenberg, Religion and the Rise of the American City. The New York City Mission Movement, 1812-1870 (Ithaca, 1971), 98.

1836 started a hospital at Kaiserswerth to help the sick poor, calling the seven female nurses deaconesses, giving them uniform dress and Bible as well as nursing training. Florence Nightingale herself owed some of her earliest nursing experience to Kaiserswerth. Kathleen Bliss even asserts that this German revival of deaconesses was 'in terms of its subsequent influence, the greatest event in the life of women in the Church since the Reformation'.[16]

Meanwhile, from 1844, with the Oxford Movement's rediscovery of the Catholic tradition within Anglicanism, some women took the then daring step of becoming Anglican nuns. The charitable work in which their early communities engaged, seems to have been used partly as a utilitarian justification to the outside world for 'papist' ritual rather than being their sole raison d'etre. However, the renown won by Florence Nightingale rubbed off on the ten Roman Catholic and fourteen Anglican sisters she had taken with her to nurse in the Crimea. The relatively greater deprivation of women as regards official ministry in church life is surely indicated by the fact that, once thus legitimated, the number of sisterhoods far outstripped the communities founded for men, who of course also had the option of priesthood - there were forty-three sisterhoods by 1878 and only ten brotherhoods.[17]

Chronologically, Anglican nuns were the pioneers of the single, religious female professional in England, but this was an option open to

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16 A. Perchenet, The Revival of the Religious Life and Christian Unity (London, 1969), 47; A. Deacon and M. Hill, 'The Problem of "Surplus Women" in the Nineteenth Century: Secular and Religious Alternatives', A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain, 5 (1972), 87; Bliss, Service, 80-81 (she means the Protestant Church).

17 O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, Part I (2nd ed. London, 1970), 506-9; M. Hill, The Religious Order (London, 1973), 9-11, 171, 198; P. F. Anson, The Call of the Cloister (rev. ed. London, 1964), 221-6, 377; Perchenet, Revival, 5-58; S. C. Carpenter, Church and People, 1789-1889 (London, 1933), 408.

those of High Church sympathies and gentle birth. The nearest Low Church or Nonconformist equivalent was the deaconess, a vocation which even more heavily stressed service to women, children and the poor rather than consecration to God for worship. Of course, the example of Fliedner's Kaiserswerth deaconesses was uppermost in the mind of the handful of clergymen[18] advocating round 1860 the more systematic use of female labour in the parish, but deaconesses evolved in England on rather different lines - the over-riding emphasis on nursing and community organisation under Mother Houses was never taken up - and not remotely in the great numbers which continued to be recruited in Germany.[19] Even at the end of the century there were parishes where deaconesses were not welcome and dioceses which did not encourage nuns.

Elizabeth Ferard, who had visited Kaiserswerth and an English community, was set apart in 1862 by the Bishop of London as the first deaconess of the Anglican Church. As she had been living for a year with two other women under a common rule of life dedicated to worship and works of mercy, this led to the creation of the only combination of the two models, a sisterhood of deaconesses, the Deaconess Community of St. Andrew. By 1878, deaconesses were working in five dioceses besides London and numbered seventy-one in Britain altogether in 1883, though the deaconess only became officially 'the one existing ordained ministry for women' in the Anglican Church in 1923-5.[20] Nonconformists took up the deaconess idea, but generally

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18 Howson, Deaconesses, and for Rev. W. Pennefather's 'Mildmay deaconesses' (who were not ordained), see Carpenter, Church, 412; Heasman, Evangelicals, 22, 38-9.

19 Eighty-three deaconess communities were founded in Europe 1836-1900, mostly in Germany and of the Revival type. In 1969 there were still 40,000 German deaconesses. Perchenet, Revival, 241, 263.

20 Sister Joanna Dss. C.S.A., 'The Deaconess Community of St. Andrew', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 12, 2, (1961); Anson, Call, 438;

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on an even more limited scale. The Wesleyans started in 1880, Hugh Price Hughes encouraging more educated, cultured 'ladies' to become 'Sisters of the People' in his London Mission; there were fifty of them by 1891, some attached to Central Halls, others nursing the poor or running day nurseries. The Rev. T. B. Stephenson set up a training institute in Ilkley offering a year's course for the Order of Wesley Deaconesses which included nursing and Bible study; the women's vocation was a mixture of preaching and pastoral care, and work among the underprivileged.[21]

Finally, in considering single full-time Christian workers, it is necessary to mention the use Evangelical clergymen made of women as Scripture readers and district visitors to working class areas, and the extensive network from 1856 of London working class Biblewomen, paid by the British and Foreign Bible Society to distribute Bibles to the poor and collect their weekly pennies towards the cost. Biblewomen found themselves doing informal simple home nursing too, and rudimentary housecraft instruction; inevitably, they were under the supervision of 'lady superintendents'.[22]

It can be seen that the deaconess and sisterhood models mutually encouraged each other's development in England, while the expansion of the middle class woman's traditional acts of charity issued in projects considered appropriate for single professionals too. It was those educational ventures, enterprises of moral protection, and nursing, which were carried over to the mission field as the natural sphere for lady

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Bliss, Service, 90; see also J. Grierson, Isabella Gilmore (London, 1962), for a deaconess who helped develop the order's autonomy.

21 K. Inglis, Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (London, 1963), 94; Heasman, Evangelicals, 94-5; Davies, Methodism, 120.

22 I. Bradley, The Call to Seriousness. The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians (London, 1976), 48; Heasman, Evangelicals, 36-7.

missionaries; in addition, the new vocations themselves were exported, as deaconesses were sent abroad and women's communities expanded or new ones were started overseas. All the developments chronicled above were important in bringing English and American women out of their homes, making a small contribution towards the expansion of women's occupations, but the limits of these advances must be remembered. Olive Anderson comments that the great change in late Victorian churchwomen's role

> was rationalized and defended in terms which preserved all the essentials of the anti-feminist position... while some women might indeed properly and usefully perform certain public functions of responsibility and honour, female subordination in family and social relationships and in other public spheres must nevertheless be praised and maintained.[23]

b) South African Missionary Women

The first missionary wife to come to South Africa arrived in 1798 with her Moravian husband to work amongst Khoi women. Donavon Williams concludes that 'generally the evidence is too shaky for an assessment of the role of missionary wives' during the early nineteenth century. A Methodist church historian similarly regrets that such wives lived too strenuously to leave 'what we should so greatly prize - a woman's account of the heroic days of the Xhosa mission'.[24] It is true that the picture available from the published literature is fragmentary. But it can be illuminated with the help of more personally revealing material from areas other than the Eastern Cape, particularly the biographical accounts and letters of Mary Moffat and her missionary daughters among the Tswana, or the correspondence of Mrs. Robertson, Mrs. Wilkinson and Mrs. Colenso, all wives of Anglican clergy

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23 Anderson, 'Women Preachers', 484.

24 B. Krüger, The Pear Tree Blossoms: A History of the Moravian Mission Stations in South Africa, 1737-1869 (Genadendal, 1966), 81-2; D. Williams, 'The Missionaries on the Eastern Frontier of the Cape Colony,

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working with the Zulu.[25] The mosaic of impressions and experiences which can thus be pieced together conveys a world very different in certain important respects from that inhabited by the missionary wives of early twentieth century urban Johannesburg. Nineteenth century missionary wives on the whole lived and worked in isolated, often dangerous rural settings, spent an inordinate amount of time organising the provision of food and clothing for their large families, and their spiritual task, in what was still only a developing missionary bureaucracy, was rather loosely defined.

Some of the wives we know a little about showed their own missionary zeal before marriage dictated that their life would be spent in helping thus to spread the Gospel. Mary Moffat recalled being 'powerfully affected' in her youth by a missionary meeting and feeling 'the cause was worth a thousand lives'; Adele Mabille fretted in France, longing 'for an active life in the service of God', often thinking that if only she were a man, she would present herself as a candidate at the Mission House.[26] Zeal notwithstanding, the frustrations of only being able to carry out direct spiritual work intermittently, are a constant refrain in the correspondence

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1799-1853' (PhD, University of the Witwatersrand, 1959), 56; L. A. Hewson, An Introduction to South African Methodists (Cape Town, 1950), 23.

25 M. Dickson, Beloved Partner: Mary Moffat of Kuruman (London, 1974); U. Long (ed.), The Journals of Elizabeth Lees Price (1956); W. Reed (ed.), Colenso Letters from Natal (Pietermaritzburg, 1958); A Lady's life and travels in Zululand and the Transvaal during Cetewayo's reign, being the African letters and journals of the late Mrs. Wilkinson (London, 1882, repr. Pretoria, 1975); Missionary Life among the Zulu-Kafirs. Memorials of Henrietta Robertson wife of the Rev. R. Robertson (Cambridge, 1866). The most lively and enlightening among these are the lettersof Mrs. Colenso and Elizabeth Price. R. First and A. Scott, Olive Schreiner (London, 1980), Ch. 1, also provides a vivid sketch of missionary family life.

26 Dickson, Beloved, 18; E. W. Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland (London, 1939), 83.

of missionary wives.[27] The basic drawback was that such women were wives first and missionaries second, if at all. First of all, child-bearing regularly disrupted any continuities of work which had been established. Like many Victorians, missionaries' families were large. Mrs. Lindley gave birth to eleven children between 1835 and 1855; Ann Tainton had twelve children, one dying in infancy, between 1820 and 1841; Mary Moffat also spent twenty years of active missionary life child-bearing and rearing, while her daughter Elizabeth had fourteen children, only two of them born near any medical help.[28] Of course, maternal involvement did not stop with birth; wives might bear the chief responsibility for their children's education. This was the case with Mrs. Lindley, who found a governess useless.[29]

Secondly, there were the many practical demands on missionary wives if domestic needs and comforts were to be provided, often far from centres supplying necessary foodstuffs and clothing. Mrs. Wilkinson found herself becoming like the Zulus, asking if things were good to eat when she heard of them; she learnt to use her wits in, for instance, cutting up and salting an animal, and remarked how 'practically ignorant' people were at home. Mrs. Mabille, when in charge of the commissariat for the Morija Bible School, saw to the supply and cooking of food for over one hundred people every day - students, apprentices, servants, her family. Her life in 1888 was 'that of a busy farmer', though she also shared in her husband's 'more agreeable, higher work'. The contrast between idea and reality had been as

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27 See for example Long, Journals, 134, 259; Dickson, Beloved, 49; E. W. Smith, The Life and Times of Daniel Lindley (1801-80) (London, 1949), 363.

28 Smith, Lindley, xxiii-xxv; R. E. Gordon, Shepstone: The Role of the Family in the History of South Africa 1820-1900 (1968), 374-5; Long, Journals, 1.

29 Smith, Lindley, 288.

strong sixty years before for Anne Hodgson in Makwassie: 'My engagements here are very different to what they were in England. Instead of visiting the beds of the sick, sewing for the poor, or attending the means of grace, I must attend to the oxen slaughtered for food, and also make butter, candles, &c.' As Bessie Price put it, the husband was jack of all trades, the wife maid of all work. While she made bread, butter and ground coffee, he had to build dwellings and keep wagons in repair.[30]

Clothing loomed large in the lives of nineteenth century missionary wives, for they not only had to provide and keep clean enough to cover their families, but had also to help clothe their converts and 'hearers'. Showing an interest in being clothed was equivalent at that time to seeking Christian instruction or baptism, which helps explain the centrality of sewing classes to female activity on mission stations. Sewing was also, of course, an essential female accomplishment and regular occupation of both the lower and upper middle classes from which most of these women came. Mrs. Mabille made all her husband's clothes except for hats and boots. In view of Daniel Lindley's reference to his wife 'sewing, stitch, stitch, stitch, stitch, without seeing any end to her sewing', Mrs. Lindley's later heartfelt praise of a friend's sewing machine 'which seems to work like magic', is most understandable: 'The invention is a blessing to womankind above all price. May the inventor be saved from all fatigue and from all sorrow of heart!' One of her diary entries shows how learning (and yearning) to share the Gospel intermingled with such mundane cares: 'Spent the morning in reading and studying Sichuana. Cut a pair of pantaloons for Mr. Lindley in the afternoon. Several women came to the door to sell a skin...O how I

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30 Mrs. Wilkinson, 53, 163; Smith, Mabilles, 355-7, 329-30; W. Shaw, Memoirs of Mrs. Anne Hodgson (London, 1836), 147; Long, Journals, 104.

long to be able to converse with the females about the concerns of their immortal souls!' It was Mrs. Colenso who voiced the most insistent obsession with clothes and their cleanliness. She loathed the naked as 'terrible eyesores' and expressed great fondness for 'soap and water and clean linen', for cleaning was 'woman's vocation'.[31]

Wives of two Anglican missionaries were obviously irked that 'home duties' took up so much of the day 'for want of good servants',[32] whose help they, as a higher social group, seem to have been more used to back in England than 'Dissenter' ministers' wives. Training female servants was an inevitable part of the duties of the nineteenth century South African missionary wife, and one which drove some to despair. The black women were taught Western housecraft partly to help out in the tasks which were heavier in Africa than at home, partly to provide suitable wives for converts. Mrs. Lindley always had four to six Zulu girls in the house. Elizabeth Price expounded on the need for patience in training them and rued her 'painful experiences in the past with these Bechuana married ladies who so hate work'. Mrs. Wilkinson, finding her three African servant girls 'a dreadful nuisance, so stupid and lazy, so inferior to the boys', had to remind herself that she was there to raise such women from a life of drudgery, but betrayed unwittingly the continuities of class attitudes by adding, 'but when they act as servants one is apt to forget what they are, and to expect more from them'. For a while they were 'the plague of my life... if it were not for their own sakes I would not keep them an hour - I would have boys', but the girls were soon 'improving immensely'. Mrs. Colenso admitted how tiring supervision was; she would 'rather have a real servant,

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31 Smith, Mabilles, 100; Smith, Lindley, 289, 326; Rees, Colenso, 96, 316, 333.

32 Mrs. Wilkinson, 38; Henrietta Robertson, 25.

not young, but one who would live in the kitchen and really take the care of things off one's hands, see that the natives did their duty'. The more generous-spirited Mrs. Robertson gave a warmer assessment of black servants. 'Our Kafir "Boy" and his wife are the greatest comfort. I cannot be thankful enough for such a blessing. We really could not be better cared for by English servants.' She pronounced the three girls later working in her house her 'greatest help' and 'excellent needlewomen'.[33]

When a Tswana woman rebuked Bessie Price for having no time to teach her, Mrs. Price's self-defence was illuminating. Her work was not so much to teach with her husband, 'as to keep him comfortable & his home civilized & Christian-like & to train my children and servants likewise. I must teach you by setting an example in my home life.'[34] The sentiment that the wife was, far more than her husband, the standard bearer for western civilisation and Victorian ideas of refinement, was very strong. A wife was, in the first place, a virtual guarantee against sexual involvement with local non-European women. Secondly, it was clearly suspected that, left to themselves, the men would adopt much slacker modes of life. But for the 'dainty ways' of Charles Mackenzie's sister-housekeeper, it was averred, 'there might have been a danger of his unselfishness degenerating into a rougher life than was quite wholesome for the mind'. From the greater isolation of Bechuanaland, Bessie Price explained with customary fervour how difficult it was 'to keep up civilization & not to go slip-shod, any way':

> For myself I find it necessary to be <u>over</u> particular rather then <u>under</u>, for if one <u>begins</u> slipping little duties as of no consequence in such <u>hard</u> circumstances -

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33 Smith, <u>Lindley</u>, 281; Long, <u>Journals</u>, 104, 199; <u>Mrs. Wilkinson</u>, 45, 51, 67; <u>Henrietta Robertson</u>, 5, 59. Cock, <u>Maids & Madams</u>, 213-4, 222, has further examples of the relationship between missionary mistress and African woman servant.

34 Long, <u>Journals</u>, 216.

> oh how one runs downhill!...The wife is indeed the sunshine of her African home. If she is about & bustling, all is cheery & nice - if she is laid up the house is a scene of misery in no time. I often feel quite proud of this...Our chief work is to keep the Husbands up - up from sinking down down gradually into native style of living - & from losing hearts & spirits in that great work in which we but act as organ blowers to the musician.[35]

Under all these circumstances, discontinuous spiritual service by wives was understandable. The English and American stereotypes were carried over: the natural sphere for the missionary's wife was teaching women and children. Mrs. Lindley had a daily afternoon school for the children and later a sewing school was welcomed by the Zulu women. Mrs. Moffat started a sewing class after a revival, later visited old women and taught a Bible class. Bessie Price, in her early years as a missionary wife, did two afternoons of sewing school a week, later teaching spelling and the alphabet; but only resumed the direct evangelism of her girlhood after nearly twenty years of marriage. Already in 1837 Mrs. Adams had a sewing school for thirty women twice a week and 250 to 300 pupils in Sunday school. Mrs. Wilkinson taught school in the afternoon. Mrs. Hodgson had forty girls in a sewing class at Boetsap and a women's meeting once a week. Mrs. Robertson taught in the 'Kafir school' every night. Wives did sometimes do work more like men's: some American Board women helped translate the Bible into Zulu. Mrs. Mabille, through her decades of widowhood, continued concerned for the conversion of the Sotho chiefs and maintained close relationships with the Basuto pastors. The wide intellectual, musical and scientific interests sustained by the cultured Mrs. Colenso amidst all this irrefutable industry appear all the more remarkable.[36]

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35 B. le Cordeur and C. Saunders, The Kitchingman Papers (Johannesburg, 1976), 35; F. Awdry, An Elder Sister. A Short Sketch of Anne Mackenzie and her brother the missionary bishop (3rd ed. London, 1904), 70; Long, Journals, 104-5.

36 See over.

Once missionary daughters were old enough to share these tasks, they became important if not always initially willing assistants, and as their mothers aged, took over as her substitutes (a number in turn married missionaries). In certain areas this perhaps acted to blunt the urgency of the need for single women appointees who could provide full-time service and continuity. We read of Mrs. Brownlee's daughters helping with infant school and teaching sewing, and the Mabille girls' aid in the housework, the school, Morija Book Depot and even its post office. All the Lindley children taught in the Sunday school and two daughters in the day school, while one Moffat daughter helped run the home and another the infant school and sewing and Bible classes. The intelligent, competent Colenso daughters had wide responsibilities. At first Harriette taught the Sunday School with Fanny and supervised the housework and linen girls; then she started an afternoon school. Her mother commented that 'with her ardent disposition she needs some object to expend herself on'. In preparing Langalibalele's case for John Shepstone's inquiry, Harriette was 'quite her Father's secretary'; after the Bishop's death, it was Harriette who tried to get a successor to her father elected, 'but being only a woman she cannot openly take the lead'. Another daughter, Agnes, continued the mission work; she supervised the schoolmaster, taught singing and exercises, and read Pilgrim's Progress to a class of women on Sundays.[37]

Nineteenth century missionary wives in isolated parts of rural South Africa had to endure physical hardships - dependence on unpredictable

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36 Smith, Lindley, 291, 317; Dickson, Beloved, 93-4, 107; Long, Journals, 134, 155, 392 ff.; D. J. Kotze (ed.), Letters of the American Missionaries 1835-1838 (Cape Town, 1950), 174-5; Mrs. Wilkinson, 73; Shaw, Memoirs, 207, 216; Henrietta Robertson, 14, 49-50; Smith, Mabilles, 360; Rees, Colenso, 40-41, 153-6, 314, 208 ff.

37 B. Holt, Greatheart of the Border (King Williams Town, 1976), 110-1; Smith, Mabilles, 332; Smith, Lindley, 291; Dickson, Beloved, 137; Long, Journals, 9; Rees, Colenso, 98, 133, 180, 320, 374, 380-1.

weather to assure a food supply, danger from upheavals like the Mfecane of the 1820's, distance from doctors, which increased the vulnerability of children to fatal illness. Sometimes it was the wife's own early death which ensued, as when Mrs. Wilson and Mrs. Grout of the American Board died within the first year. Berthoud of the Swiss Mission lost his wife and five children in the space of a year in the Spelonken of the Northern Transvaal, and his second wife died there of dysentery. Missionary families were embroiled in war: Eastern Cape stations were burnt and the inhabitants forced to flee; the Mabilles helped the Sotho hide their grain from the Free State boers and sheltered refugees. The strain of violent times led in at least one case to the return home of a missionary couple (the Champions) because of the wife's nervous breakdown.[38]

There were also, though, emotional burdens of isolation recorded silently in the diaries of missionary wives. Thus Ann Shepstone yearned to see England again:

> At times I have thought I might sleep in Africa,
> but Lord, Thou knowest the wish of my heart and
> the yearnings of my soul - to behold once more...
> Thy sanctuary and worship Thee in Thy Holy Temple...
> Oh, who but Thou canst tell the solitariness of
> a missionary's wife.

Ann Tainton, another frontier Methodist, talked more mundanely of her nostalgia after twenty-three years' missionary service for 'the better society and the crowded churches and chapels'. Mrs. Colenso found separation from 'our own flesh and blood' the drawback, and reading accounts of 'select gatherings' at home, felt 'a certain banishment'. The spiritual work could be discouraging too. Mary Moffat wrote, depressed, of the ridicule and contempt with which their message was still received after five years without a convert or a hopeful sign. Parting with teenage children who

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38 Kotze, Letters, 14, 225; H. Davies, Great South African Christians (Oxford, 1951), 155-6; Smith, Mabilles, 141-50.

had to travel to England or America for further education was always a sad wrench. To the morbidly introspective Mrs. Hodgson, the sacrifice of 'religious privileges', fellowship with congenial pious Methodists, was one of the heaviest losses. She longed to have 'my cold heart warmed, my languid desires quickened' by chapel or a class meeting. After her second daughter had died and they were all alone, the Archbells having left the station, her distress, like that of Elizabeth Price in a similar situation, was acute: 'The world has now lost its charms, and appears an empty void'.[39]

Some missionary wives were clearly women of extraordinary force and competence, held back to a degree by convention. A Lindley daughter commented of Mrs. Edwards, brought out to run Inanda Girls Seminary, 'She and mamma would make two fine leaders if they were oxen in a span, or else men and able to go ahead. I am almost afraid they long for the lever to lift the world.' Socialisation into dependence and excessive self-immolation curbed them. Even the highly intelligent and resourceful Mrs. Colenso saw herself as 'a mere appendix' and despaired of her purpose in life after the Bishop's death: 'My Lord and Master, my superior in every way, morally and intellectually. O, what will become of me now.'[40]

Most Protestant missionary societies employed a handful of single women as teachers in various parts of the globe in the mid years of the century, but the systematic recruitment of such women became significant only in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In the last decade, between 27 and 51 per cent of the recruits in three British societies were female. By 1900, of 18,782 missionaries throughout the world, 3,628 were

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39 Gordon, Shepstone, 68-9, 377; Rees, Colenso, 141, 146; Dickson, Beloved, 60; Smith, Lindley, 292; Long, Journals, 122-9; Shaw, Memoirs, 172-83, 212.

40 Smith, Lindley, 385; Rees, Colenso, 374, 380.

single women and 4,340 wives; by 1929 two-thirds of the mission personnel of six US societies were female.[41]

The recent investigation by C. P. Williams of this process attributes the change to two forces: 'the decisive pressure of the needs of missionaries abroad, and the aspirations of women at home'. On the one hand societies realised that without women appointees, their success with indigenous women had been limited, and on the other, it became clear that there were a fair number of women wanting to go and a large number prepared to form and run their own women's societies to fund and send them. And so conservative caution was overcome by a battery of new arguments to the effect that 'it was safe for women to be missionaries, that only women could reach women and that the conversion of mothers was a key to greater missionary success'. In fact, the mortality rate of young, child-bearing wives in Africa made Bishop Hannington write to the CMS in 1885 that he would 'welcome a few strapping old maids - send out a dozen to try'.[42]

This step forward surely owed something too to those key developments of the 1850's and 1860's which, as we have seen, expanded women's role in the home churches, and also to the new opportunities opening up for women in education and teaching. Sarah Potter has claimed that it was precisely the diversification of missions into service activities like education and

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41 S. C. Potter, 'The Social Origins and Recruitment of English Protestant Missionaries in the Nineteenth Century' (PhD, University of London, 1975), 237, n.17; C. P. Williams, 'The Recruitment and Training of Overseas Missionaries in England between 1850 and 1900' (M. Letters, University of Bristol, 1976), 339, 345, 351; R. P. Beaver, All Loves Excelling. American Protestant Women in World Mission (Grand Rapids, 1968), 108-9. There is unfortunately no general British survey of women and missions comparable with Beaver's.

42 Williams, 'Recruitment', 303, 300; J. S. Isherwood, 'An Analysis of the role of single women in the work of the Church Missionary Society, 1804-1904, in West Africa, India and China' (MA, University of Manchester, 1979), 40.

medicine that provided new openings for women; her point is to stress women's recruitment from these new professions and their chanelling into schools, orphanages and hospitals. Outside of these special fields, Isherwood considers that single women, especially in India and China, were more confined overseas than at home. Williams, by contrast, makes out a persuasive case, unconsciously echoing Olive Anderson, for the Revival having caused the key breakthrough in the understanding of the place of women missionaries: it legitimised the increasing use of lay personnel and gave certain denominations doctrinal validation for the use of women in evangelism, instead of simply 'service' work among women and children.[43]

A weakness common to the two comparative inquiries, and obviously an irremediable gap in the sources, is the large number of women the nature of whose employment, either on the mission field or prior to departure, they cannot specify. The importance of education does emerge, with between one quarter and two-fifths of English women missionaries employed in that sphere; Potter informs us further that teachers and nurses featured prominently among candidates recruited. For the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS), for example, they constituted some 42 per cent of women sent in 1890-9. For my purposes, a further drawback is that, of the three societies at work on the Reef on which attention will be focused, only the Wesleyan Methodists have come within the orbit of the detailed research on candidates carried out thus far.[44]

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43 Potter, 'Social Origins', 218 ff; Isherwood, 'Single Women', 187, 239, 253; Williams, 'Recruitment', 301, 313-4.

44 Potter, 'Social Origins', 230, 260-1; Williams, 'Recruitment', 383-4. Williams looks at the CMS, LMS, WMMS and CIM (China Inland Mission), Potter at the first three and the Baptist Missionary Society. No doubt researchers have been put off the SPG by its longevity and its mixed character, for it sent ministers to white colonials on a large scale as well as providing 'missionaries to the heathen'. American researchers have not, to my knowledge, shown a comparable interest in missionary candidates yet.

Single women missionaries were invariably sent and supported by women's missionary associations, which proliferated in the second half of the nineteenth century. The WMMS had the earliest ladies' committee, founded in 1858, and run autocratically for years; it had the greatest autonomy but recruited a smaller number than the LMS or CMS, perhaps unable to escape the Society's general financial malaise and stagnancy discernible in the late nineteenth century. The Ladies Association of the SPG started in 1866, added medical work to education in 1897, and by 1900 had 186 women missionaries in the field. The three Women's Boards of Missions of the American Congregational Church, founded 1868-73, sprang, like other American women's missionary organisations, from an interdenominational society established by women in 1861 because, as was the case in England, existing mission boards would not let women share their work (they could raise funds, but not be full members of societies) and spurned offers from unmarried women candidates. Beaver attributes the 'dramatic' growth of the female missionary movement to the potency of this enforced separateness.[45]

It is even more unsatisfactory in the case of single women as opposed to missionary wives to attempt to construct some generalised picture of their life from secondary sources, as the literature is even scarcer. The female missionary anthologies which appeared in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, focusing more on the East than Africa, eulogised

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45 Williams, 'Recruitment', 15, 308-9; A. M. Hellier, Workers Together: The Story of the Women's Auxiliary of the WMMS (London, 1931?), 9, 52; H. P. Thompson, Into All Lands. The History of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701-1950 (London, 1951), 235; M. Underhill, 'Women's Work for Missions: Three Home Base Studies. 1. American Women's Boards', International Review of Missions, XIV, 55 (July 1925), 380-4; Beaver, All Loves, 86.

married women for the most part.[46] This was inevitable not only because wives then outnumbered single women, but also because wives accompanying pioneering husbands provided more exciting biographies than single women sent later in safer times to institutional jobs. The pious death of the young missionary wife made heart-rending copy; lacking sentimental ties, the single woman cut a more unromantic figure altogether.

Two full-length biographies of such women for South African Protestant missions have captured somewhat atypical late Victorian figures: the charming, competent foundress of a very active community of Anglican nuns, Mother Cecile, and a hardy Scottish widow, Christina Forsyth, who spent thirty years in a small Mfengu village in an obscure, inaccessible Transkeian valley.[47] By 1900, one has the impression that the more familiar setting for single women missionaries was neither so exalted nor so lowly. Such women were usually part of a large rural mission community and invariably linked with education, especially the central girls' boarding schools and teacher training institutions which became well-known in the Cape and Natal - St. Matthew's, Healdtown, Lovedale, Impolweni, Emgwali, Blythswood, Shawbury, St. Hilda's, Inanda.[48]

Mother Cecile's sisterhood at first worked among whites on lines becoming conventional in England for women. The sisters branched out into

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46 J. Telford, Women in the Mission Field: Glimpses of Christian Women among the Heathen (London, 1895); E. R. Pitman, Heroines of the Mission Field (London, 1880?).

47 Mother Cecile in South Africa 1883-1906. Foundress of the Community of the Resurrection of our Lord, Compiled by a sister of the Community (London, 1930); W. P. Livingstone, Christina Forsyth of Fingoland: The Story of the Loneliest Woman in Africa (London, 1919?).

48 Cock, Maids, Ch. 8, discusses the domestic slant of this education but not the teachers.

mission work among Africans in the 1890's, teaching academic and housecraft subjects at St. Matthew's, just as lay spinsters did.[49] Webb, the bishop who secured Mother Cecile for South Africa, really pioneered extensive Anglican use of women workers in his Bloemfontein diocese. His attitudes tend to contradict the picture of sisterhoods as the most feminist of the religious options for single women. He stressed that women's role was 'supplementary...to be a "help-meet" for Man' and emphasised that sisterhoods should be under the central control of bishops, 'not under the irresponsible rule of any woman'. By the end of the 1870's there were some thirty women on Webb's Bloemfontein staff, some in the sisterhood he initiated, one deaconess and other associate workers, the full range which had emerged in England. They were teaching white girls as well as African and Coloured children, doing hospital and outdoor nursing, visiting and parochial work, and superintending household and laundry arrangements, all spheres which were becoming increasingly common for churchwomen in England.[50]

Christina Forsyth revived the church cause at Xolobe, beginning by visiting the sick, then opening a day school, running a Bible class for African girls and gathering the people together for services. In that isolated rural setting, her lack of family did not free her from domestic demands: her labours in plastering walls, scrubbing floors, baking for Christmas, killing sheep and roasting and grinding coffee, are inevitably part of the account of her life. Her range of activities illustrate how in out of the way places, women missionaries might perform all the religious duties of a minister, short of administering the sacraments of baptism and

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49 See Mother Cecile, passim. and 47-52.

50 A. B. Webb, Sisterhood Life and Woman's Work in the Mission Field of the Church (London, 1883), 10, 57; 'The Bishop of Bloemfontein on Woman's Work in South Africa', Mission Field (Aug.-Sept. 1878), 392.

holy communion: she held Sunday services, two candidates' classes, Sunday school, a senior class for women learning to read the Bible, prayer meetings, meetings for school children on Saturdays, and ran a branch of a society later incorporated with the Women's Christian Association of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. Gertrude Hance similarly took charge of Esidumbeni for the ABM, dispensing medicine and settling land disputes in addition.[51] But both in their solitary way of life and in their degree of spiritual responsibility, these two women were among the exceptions to the rule as regards the role of single women missionaries in late nineteenth century South Africa.

c) The Response of African Women to Christianity

Missionaries first settled among the Xhosa and Tswana in the 1820's. Significantly, the most Christianised blacks in South Africa today are the Western Transvaal and Northern Cape Tswana, while the Methodists' overall lead among the denominations is due to their very marked predominance among the Cape Nguni, of whom the Xhosa are the largest group. The mission frontier advanced to the Southern Sotho and the Natal Nguni in the 1830's; again, these were groups which eventually showed a high proportion of converts. From 1850 the Methodists were at work in the Orange Free State; from 1860 the Berlin missionaries laboured among the Pedi, although these Sotho people of the Northern and Eastern Transvaal remain the least Christianised today. By 1880 the new faith was well established in most 'tribal' areas but still predominantly rurally-orientated. Its literate African members were

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51 Livingstone, Christina Forsyth, 71-2, 82-5, 111, 114; G. R. Hance, The Zulu Yesterday and To-day (New York, 1916), 179-80.

becoming teachers and pastors.[52]

South Africa's patrilineal, male-dominated Nguni and Sotho societies had broadly similar economies based both on mixed agriculture, which was largely women's work, and pastoralism, which was the responsibility of men and boys. Recent analyses of the pre-industrial period have enlarged our understanding of the central importance of cattle for access to women's productive and reproductive capacities:

> The accumulation of cattle was directly related not only to political power, but also to material power, as it allowed the cattle-owner to increase his number of wives - that is ultimately the size of the lineage, homesteads, production communities, and number of producers.[53]

But the detailed exploration of women's role in production itself, as opposed to their significance in the circulation of the community's main form of storable wealth, is only just beginning. Margaret Kinsman has made an important initial contribution.[54] A further dimension urgently in need of investigation is the change in rural African women's position after the forcible integration of their societies into the developing white settler economies. The multiplying studies of migrant labour[55] shed light on a sex-exclusive phenomenon: early migrants were males. Similarly, for the 'peasants' whose prosperity and decline have been so strikingly charted

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52 B. A. Pauw, 'The Influence of Christianity', in W. D. Hammond-Tooke (ed.), The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa (London, 1974), 416-21. No detailed historical survey has been published since J. du Plessis, A History of Christian Missions in South Africa (London, 1911).

53 J. Guy, 'Ecological factors in the rise of Shaka and the Zulu Kingdom', in S. Marks and A. Atmore (eds.), Economy and society in pre-industrial South Africa (London, 1980), 114. See also Introduction and essays by Beinart and Bonner in the same volume.

54 'Beasts of Burden: Women in Southern Tswana Production, 1800-1840', unpub. paper, 1981.

55 P. Delius, 'Migrant Labour and the Pedi, 1840-80', in Marks and Atmore, Economy, was one of the earliest.

by Bundy, read 'males'. Their new surplus followed from the use of animal-drawn ploughs which overturned the traditional sexual division of labour since 'the use of animals was the male preserve'.[56]

Despite these major gaps in our knowledge, is it possible to produce some generalisations about the nineteenth century response of African women to Christian missionaries? Bliss voices the conventional wisdom of the missionaries on the conversion of heathen women:

> ...in so many cases, it was the women who had most to receive from the Gospel, the heaviest chains to lose, and, at the same time, often the highest price to pay for the new freedom because of the binding power of custom on the woman, and her helplessness in her complete dependence on man.[57]

Were African women any easier to convert than men on account of their position in the traditional social structure? The very opposite was the case in late nineteenth century Nyasaland. Richard Stuart has shown how the central importance of women of child-bearing age to the matrilineal Chewa social system meant females were under the greatest pressure to conform. Husbands were peripheral to the consanguine kin group; the relationship between woman and child was much more important. Women played the key role as teachers of the young and custodians of social tradition in the initiation of girls and instruction of newly-weds. Less central individuals like slaves or young boys were more likely to convert, not free adults or girls; conversion demanded greater sacrifice from women.[58]

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56 C. Bundy, The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry (London, 1979), 95.

57 Bliss, Service, 104-5. For missionary comments on women as degraded 'slaves' and beasts of burden, see Cock, Maids, 283. M-L. Swantz, 'Church and the changing role of women in Tanzania' in Fashole-Luke, Christianity, 140, aptly notes how, despite missionary defence of women's independent right to become Christians and choose their own marriage partners, subsequently 'the church became the guardian of traditional Christian virtues', entrenching female subservience in home and congregation.

58 See over.

Again, detailed research of conversion in South Africa, paying particular reference to gender, is scarce. One can amass the opinions of various missionaries as to the greater conservatism of African women, from Brownlee in the Ciskei in the 1830's lamenting 'the carelessness of the women and their being more tenacious in retaining their sinful practices than the men', to Calderwood's view that the women were very sceptical and staunch traditionalists, to Bishop Webb in 1878 urging the employment of female missionaries in order to 'avoid the expensive disaster of Kaffir wars and chronic native restlessness', as African women were 'more wedded to heathen customs than the men; in Zululand they are keeping 20,000 young warriors waiting for wives "until they have wetted their spears in blood"'.[59] Tlhaping women baloi joining with the wives of the Griquatown church supporters in an outbreak of anti-Christian sorcery in 1843-5 at Lekatlong, provide a specific example of traditional backlash against missions led by women.[60]

However, in his careful analysis of mission station residents and opponents, Etherington concludes that up to the 1870's, hostility to Christianity came from 'nearly everyone' among Natal Africans, though 'as often as not women led the fight against conversion'.[61] If opposition cannot

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58 R. G. Stuart, 'Christianity and the Chewa: The Anglican Case 1885-1950' (PhD, University of London, 1974), 27-32, 89, 126.

59 Holt, Greatheart, 99; R. A. Moyer, 'A History of the Mfengu of the Eastern Cape 1815-1865' (PhD, University of London, 1976), 540; Mission Field (Aug.-Sept. 1878), 397.

60 M. C. Legassick, 'The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana, and the Missionaries, 1780-1840: The Politics of a Frontier Zone' (PhD, UCLA, 1969), 628.

61 N. A. Etherington, Preachers, Peasants and Politics in Southeast Africa, 1835-1880. African Christian Communities in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand (London, 1978), 59-61.

be correlated with sex, class or status, can support? Both Etherington and Donavon Williams emphasise that, before the Nguni were militarily broken and politically undermined, mission stations attracted those seeking secular advantage - employment, land, homes, material goods - together with outcasts, refugees and misfits. It is clear that women could feature prominently among such refugees (just as the self-improvers were mostly men) on account of certain life crises peculiar to their sex. It was aberrant for women in traditional society to live alone - a daughter, wife or widow belonged with her father, husband or son - but the mission station provided an alternative set of protectors, which made escape possible. More importantly, it provided an alternative productive base at a time when women normally gained access to agricultural land only through marriage.

The mission station was a magnet for young girls avoiding marriage or concubinage; cast-off old wives; or widows escaping the levirate. Likewise women (always especially vulnerable as strangers among their husbands' kin) were fleeing from malicious co-wives, accusations of witchcraft or the shame of barrenness, or sensing a call to divination.[62] Male missionaries substituted for traditional patriarchal authority. Despite general mission opposition to lobola, the payments made for children taken into early Anglican missionary homes in Zululand to perform and learn domestic tasks, were transformed in the case of girls to a kind of bride price. The cattle paid for such a girl had, in turn, to be paid to the missionary, the surrogate father, by her

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62 See Williams, 'Missionaries', 275-282, and M. Dinnerstein, 'The American Board Mission to the Zulu, 1835-1900' (PhD, Columbia University, 1971), 41-3; Etherington, Preachers, 95-9; Hance, Zulu, 222-3. For tussles over runaways, see Henrietta Robertson, 166-8, 197-9. Etherington makes the important observation that it is harder to say why individuals were baptised than to account for their coming to the mission station.

suitor.[63] Mission stations provided, because of their opposition to polygyny and their desire to protect women converts from heathen marriage, a natural sanctuary for unwilling runaway brides escaping old men or polygamists or pagans, or individuals who were all three. Tobi, an old widow, 'a lone woman, a pet and hanger-on' of the Robertsons, had lost husband and son through witchcraft accusation.[64]

Nguni and Sotho men could be said to have had more to give up than women. Perhaps this was perceived by the chief who told a Methodist missionary in 1827 'that the religion was good enough for "old women and children" and too childish for them to think about'.[65] Pauw sees obstacles to male church membership in 'traditional ideas of manliness associated with war and fighting, the herding activities of boys (preventing them from attending Christian schools), and the strictures against polygyny'. In addition, men, as household heads and community leaders, were inevitably more involved in traditional ritual and ceremonial.[66] A man who converted was also committing his family to the new faith while a woman, who was without legal status, did not involve others in her decision, suggests Vilakazi. But parental wrath at the financial loss entailed in runaway daughters rather contradicts this assertion.[67] Women did not have public political and military

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63 Mrs. Wilkinson, 146-9; N. A. Etherington, 'The Rise of the Kholwa in South East Africa. African Christian Communities in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand 1835-1880' (PhD, Yale University, 1971), 196-7.

64 Henrietta Robertson, 178.

65 Williams, 'Missionaries', 332.

66 Pauw, 'Influence', 422.

67 A. Vilakazi, Zulu Transformations (Pietermaritzburg, 1962), 11-12. J. Tyler, Forty Years among the Zulus (repr. Cape Town, 1971; first pub. Boston, 1891), 64, records long paternal resistance to allowing daughters to live in the missionary's family, although they were offered 'good compensation'; fathers said girls would be 'spoiled' and would make trouble and refuse to marry old polygamists. When a chief refused to marry a converted daughter of Sandile, because Christian

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functions to forfeit as a result of the disloyalty to the chief which conversion was frequently seen to constitute. Not all early female converts, though, were obscure individuals; some were from chiefly families. The Scottish missionaries won over Ngqika's daughter Hena, who subsequently refused to enter a polygamous marriage, while the Anglicans trained a daughter of Sandile and appointed her a teacher at Grahamstown in 1865.[68]

Once the beginnings of a Christian community was established, the widespread mission prohibition of kaffir beer and polygamy would act to discourage and exclude men more than women, particularly as there was usually more leniency towards wives of polygamists as having less choice in the matter than husbands.[69] (Monogamy had its disadvantages for women too, entailing extra physical burdens in child-bearing and agriculture because there were no co-wives to share tasks).

In fact, it is precisely the point at which Etherington stops, the period after the 1880's, which needs to be opened up to research in its total social and economic context, for this was the period when mass conversions began. Once again, it is important to differentiate converts by gender and contrasting productive roles. Elaine Unterhalter documents the substantially greater number of Zulu women baptised in the 1890's, some two-thirds of the adult total; figures of child baptism were very high too. She suggests that

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marriage would restrict him to one wife, Sandile removed another daughter, Victoria, from (interestingly) the home of Tiyo Soga, a black minister, 'and compelled her to smear herself with red clay and wear a blanket'. He feared the loss of a hundred head of cattle. The grieving girl, as a minor, 'had no recourse but to submit to her father's authority'. C. F. Brownlee, Reminiscences of Kafir Life and History (repr. Pietermaritzburg, 1977, first pub. 1896), 52.

68 J. Lennox, United Free Church of Scotland. The Story of Our Missions (Edinburgh, 1911), 29; C. F. Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of the SPG (London, 1901), 303.

69 See B. A. Pauw, Christianity and Xhosa Tradition (Cape Town, 1975), 87, on the common agreement existing today that these two factors accounted for the disproportion of the sexes in church membership.

this was rooted in the sexual division of labour and contrasting religious remedies for the ecological disasters of the time. Men, faced with devastating cattle losses after rinderpest, resorted to the ancestors for protection or tried desperately to replenish their herds by marrying their daughters to wealthy, old polygynists. Neither action was compatible with Christian mores. Women, on the other hand, confronting declining agricultural productivity or drought, appealed to a female fertility goddess or the shadowy Zulu High God. The ancestral cult was not important here. Thus the transition to faith in and appeal to the Christian God could be made more easily. Women increasingly applied to the missionaries in the 1890's for prayers for rain and many prayer services were held.[70]

Thus in the first generation of mission work, one could tentatively conclude that Christianity appealed to women who were seeking an alternative homestead to escape distressing personal circumstances. A half-century later, the church's supernatural aid was urgently sought by those whose traditional subsistence base, from which they supported their children, was under extensive threat. The tremendously enthusiastic response of women to Christian exhortations to pray, though, surely betokens too a thirst for meaningful spiritual access largely denied them in traditional society, though of course it was hoped that that access would restore their material security.

The significance of African agency in helping to spread the Gospel has now been well established in the historiography of the church in Africa. However, inevitably replicating the pride of place which the sending churches

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70 E. Unterhalter, 'Religion, Ideology and Social Change in the Nquthu District, 1879-1910' (PhD, University of London, 1981), Chs. 7, 10.

gave to clergy, the stress has been on male catechists, preachers and ministers.[71] A combing of even the secondary literature does more justice to the part played by African women in the expansion of Christianity. Khoi interpreters using Dutch were key intermediaries for the missionary encounter on the Cape Eastern frontier; so were Africans of mixed Khoi-Xhosa ancestry, who had some familiarity with the life of the colony prior to hearing the Gospel.[72] Sarah and Maria Nomali, and Lydia Midi, among the converts Shaw listed for Wesleyville in 1830, all 'first heard the Word of God in the Colony'.[73]

One such intermediary for the Moravians was a woman, Wilhelmina Stompjes. From the Ngqika originally, she had lived on various frontier farms including Coenraad Buys's, and came to Genadendal with other Xhosa after the decision by Colonel Collins in 1809 that all Africans should be expelled beyond the Fish River, those wanting to stay, to go to Moravian settlements. Wilhelmina was baptised at Genadendal and served as a nursemaid to the mission children, teaching them Xhosa and thereby facilitating further missionary work - one such pupil was in charge at Shiloh station for twenty-six years. Keen for the Moravians to preach the Gospel to her own people, she joined a party going to a new station on the Witte River in 1818 and then in 1828 helped pioneer work among the Thembu outside the colony, north of the Winterberg, teaching converts' children and becoming

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71 For South Africa, for example, see W. G. Mills, 'The Role of African Clergy in the Reorientation of Xhosa Society to the Plural Society in the Cape Colony, 1850-1915' (PhD, UCLA, 1975). One fascinating partial exception, on early Anglican women catechists in Uganda, is M. L. Pirouet, Black Evangelists. The Spread of Christianity in Uganda 1891-1914 (London, 1978), 60-1, 73-4, 142.

72 These Khoi-Xhosa intermediaries may also have reconciled the two religious systems in a way appealing to Africans; Moyer, 'Mfengu', 500-1. See Pauw, Christianity, on how Khoi-Xhosa and Mfengu provided the core of mission station populations.

73 Williams, 'Missionaries', 274.

the missionaries' sole interpreter. She was obviously a gifted preacher in her own right, for in translating addresses she added her own 'picturesque illustrations and vigorous exhortations', while 'her private conversations proved a blessing to many'. Three decades later, her longing for Christian expansion to her own people had not abated and she called on various chiefs to apply for missionaries.[74]

The first American Board convert was a woman, Mbulasi Makanya, who became Dr. Adams's 'able and efficient helper'. Leading prayer meetings and visiting homes, she deserves much of the credit for the rapid growth of the small church membership in the few years following her baptism, having, Adams testified, 'a naturally strong mind, now well stored with divine truth,...good judgment, considerable intelligence, and a kind and friendly disposition'. (She had come to Adams's station in 1836-7 after he had cured her son's skin disease; it is also possible that she was avoiding marrying her husband's brother).[75]

Women could show great faithfulness even in the absence of missionaries. When the Moravians returned to South Africa in 1792, it was Lena (presumably a Khoi woman), the last survivor of Schmidt's 'baptized first fruits' of half a century before, who welcomed them. She was very old, but treasured her New Testament carefully wrapped in sheepskin and a leather bag. A century later, when the Rev. Samuel Clark came to Shawbury in the Transkei in 1893 after a period of war and neglect, though the Methodist buildings were in a deplorable condition, he found there Sophia Kiviet, 'a fine

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74 Kruger, Pear Tree, 105, 132, 170, 174-5, 264.

75 A. F. Christoferson, Adventuring with God: The Story of the American Board Mission in Africa (Durban, 1967?), 27-9; Dinnerstein, 'American', 41. Note from Moyer, 'Mfengu', 520, that the Methodist Ayliff's first Mfengu convert was a woman, Elizabeth Lydda; the first male was baptised two years later, in 1834.

native woman who, having been a teacher under the Rev. W. S. Davis, had remained throughout the unsettled period and continued the day school for girls'.[76]

African women were at times the close acquaintances and trusted assistants of white women missionaries. Mrs. Anne Hodgson found, when she and Mrs. Archbell were giving African girls reading and sewing lessons, that the orphan girl she had adopted was 'at once my servant, companion, and interpreter to the children'. Manchonae, a Basutoland convert of the Paris missionaries, was a 'bright and earnest Christian woman' who cooked for the Bible School students. Penelope Liengoane became a firm friend of Mrs. Mabille. Her innate helpfulness and sense of humour must have been assets in her work as matron of the Normal School for twenty years. The mother of eight children, she was a faithful evangelist; an eye-opening trip to the Pedi in 1873 evoked from Penelope a comment as to the size of the world and how they must work to prepare teachers for all the many peoples who as yet did not know God. Christina Forsyth had a series of African women helpers who had come through mission schools and training institutes like Emgwali. Ntintille did school teaching and visitation for a while, but the cold weather made her resign. Antyi Mbanga, a later assistant, was loved and respected; first working in the school, she later 'exercised real power in the district' in her evangelistic work. Bekiwe, a former pupil of Forsyth's at Paterson, was 'eager and devoted in her service for Christ' and fearless in the face of local ridicule; the initial popular amazement 'that this trim, wholesome girl had been a "red clay" like themselves', though expressed in mission phraseology, underlines an

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76 Kruger, Pear Tree, 52; W. G. Mears, Mission to Clarkebury (Cape Town, 1973?), 39.

important truth - there were a small number of women converts who had made a visible transition to a new life.[77]

In the second half of the century, especially in those more democratic churches which encouraged it, African women were taking some formal positions of spiritual leadership (as distinct from school teaching), although probably largely with their own sex. At Thaba Nchu in 1874, for example, ten of the thirty-seven Methodist 'classes' had women leaders. As early as 1865, four African Anglican women referred to as 'deaconesses' were reporting the sick and needy, praying and exhorting, and urging that children be sent to school. In the 1890's Anglican women were preaching to other women in Tembuland and Fingoland. Contemporaneously, Hannah, a middle-aged ABM convert too old to learn to read or sing, worked as a Biblewoman; her 'earnest faith' helped others, especially through the 'intelligent and beautiful simplicity and directness of her prayers'.[78] Perhaps there was more freedom for women to help evangelise in the earlier days, when no males were ready for ordination either; once schools giving a rudimentary theological education were established, women took more of a back seat. The authority ascribed to the wife of the minister or catechist began to outrank the position of spiritual responsibility achievable by a woman with prophetic or preaching gifts.

The annual reports of the three main missions on which this study is based, were dipped into for the years 1850, 1880 and 1895, providing a series of 'snapshots'. In 1850, it is female school pupils who are

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77 Shaw, Memoirs, 187; Smith, Mabilles, 330, 198, 215, 230, 362; Livingstone, Christina Forsyth, 102, 133.

78 I. S. J. Venter, Die Sendingstasie Thaba Nchu, 1833-1900 (Pretoria, 1960), 33; Pascoe, SPG, 309, 316f; Hance, Zulu, 215-7.

mentioned in the reports. In 1880 the senior Methodist minister's wife established a women's prayer meeting at Healdtown, while the Americans were battling that year not only against lobola and beer, but with male leaders in the social and religious sphere who were determined to go back to polygamy (this is no doubt the phenomenon of male converts happily monogamous when poor and disadvantaged, but wanting, once their economic position gradually improved, to show their enhanced wealth and status in the traditional way). All three issues were signs of disincentives for males to remain keen Christians. 1895 provides examples of women holding firm. Several Methodist women in the Zoutpansberg had 'suffered much from their heathen husbands on account of their refusing to give up Christianity', while in a nearby village when 'the teacher had been driven by persecution from the place, an old crippled woman took the reins of church government in her hands, and held regular religious services in the face of real persecution'. The American report mentions two Biblewomen, 'earnest Christians, happy in their work', going out twice a week from one of the stations. Five women, three of them wives of male students, had joined seventeen men in the theological seminary. Finally, as regards young girls, Inanda was crowded out by 122 pupils by contrast with the nineteen who had filled it at its inception a quarter century before and the missionaries were satisfied that many of the pupils showed signs of the Holy Spirit's inner working: 'Night and morning the voice of prayer is heard from all parts of the building.' The Americans remarked that the striking feature that year was the increase in the number of runaway girls escaping marriage to old men 'who would simply make slaves of them'. Forty girls had sought refuge in Mr. Ransom's house. Clearly, this was the impact of rinderpest, though the missionaries did not make that connection.[79]

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79 See over.

Finally, again on the basis of scattered references, one can attempt to make out a case for a development from early on in the nineteenth century of an affinity with emotional praying on the part of African women converts. This perhaps then needs to be related in turn to some psychological arguments based on woman's closeness to life crises, for some of which, indeed, her body is, in a more intimate way than man's, the very arena on which they are played out (sex, barrenness, childbirth, nursing); based also on women's exclusion from public life and subjugation to patriarchy finding an outlet in ecstatic release; and finally taking into account the encouragement of and sympathy with these trends from churches like the Methodist. In 1829, for instance, Andrew Geddes Bain wrote of how the people at Wesleyville 'had a beastly manner during prayers of groaning and grunting at almost every sentence and many of the females weeping as if in the greatest distress'.[80] Half a century later, the Scottish missionaries among the Mfengu found that

> From time to time a wave of spiritual conviction and surrender moved the district and swept considerable numbers into the membership of the Church. These occasions often followed prayer meetings which were held by the people themselves and were carried on throughout the night.

It is the churchwomen who appear particularly prominently in these times of religious excitement - arranging the meetings, crying out to God in deep distress during them, overturning a lamp in the frenzy of the moment, proving 'singularly eloquent and fervent in their prayers'. The importance of Christian faith for the deprived was pinpointed in one old

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79 Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Boston, 1850), 93, (1880), 13-14, (1894), 19, 21-2 (the British Library copy of the 1895 Report is missing); The Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (London, 1850), 55, 60, (1880), 123, (1895), 121-2. The three SPG Reports yielded little of note on African women.

80 Williams, 'Missionaries', 216.

and poor woman who spoke of God as her home, her portion and her bread from heaven.[81] Pauw has remarked recently on the contemporary persistence in Xhosa churches of displays of emotion, loud assents, pronounced rhythmic movements, shouting and trilling, in sermons and prayers, especially among the Methodists, and the 'apparently institutionalized moaning and wailing of women during the sermon'.[82] This is not to say that the causes have remained the same; there were clearly fresh inputs from, for example, the styles of the late nineteenth century revival. This phenomenon of emotional prayer will be probed more deeply in subsequent discussion of African women's prayer associations.[83]

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81 Livingstone, Christina Forsyth, 42-3, 123.

82 Pauw, Christianity, 92-3.

83 See particularly Ch. 5, section a).

CHAPTER 2

JOHANNESBURG'S WOMEN MISSIONARIES

Close on a hundred white women missionaries were employed in church work among Africans by the Anglican, Methodist and American Board Missions in Johannesburg in the period between the South African War and the Second World War. By far the majority - eighty in all - were Anglicans. Although at least a third of these women served no longer than a year or two, so that the maximum at work in the 1930's was fifteen to the Methodist four and the ABM five women missionaries, no other church rivalled this numerical achievement (Table 1). The comparatively large female Anglican staff in Johannesburg was by no means unique to that diocese or the largest in the Church of the Province, which must stand out in South Africa for the remarkably high number of single women missionaries in its employ. The Anglican Society of Women Missionaries (SWM) had 147 members throughout the country in 1939, for instance.[1]

This chapter examines the records available on these Johannesburg women to see what generalisations can be made about why they were recruited, what class and educational background they came from, what preparation they had for the job, how long they stayed, why they left and what became of them. Without this sort of profile, the effectiveness or otherwise of the church activities these women engaged in is more difficult to account for, as is its changing nature and the differences between one mission and another.[2]

a) Recruitment

It is important to stress at the outset the relevance of the distinction

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1 SWM Journal (April 1939), 27-32. The breakdown by diocese was: Cape Town 18, Bloemfontein 5, Grahamstown 9, George 7, Kimberley 7, Johannesburg 14, St. John's 40, Natal 21, Pretoria 14, Zululand 12.

2 See Note to Tables 1-12 for discussion of the basis of enumeration and sources used. For a specimen SPG application form, see Appendix 1.

made between unmarried women and wives. Once a male missionary had married, his salary was increased to support his wife, regardless of the contribution she made to church work. If she worked very energetically, as most American Board women did, it might make the recruitment of single women less pressing. It is clear that in times of financial stringency, missionary societies deliberately terminated the paid employment of unmarried women, and reverted to their economical reliance on missionary wives. Thus Alice Weir was retrenched when the depression crippled the ABM in the 1930's.

The dependence on wives might of course mean a neglect of work with women when the wife was unenthusiastic about the missionary cause, as happened before the Bridgmans' arrival in 1913. Responsibility might have to be placed on those wives interested in involvement with African Christians, even if their husband's appointment was to a white church, as happened with the Manyano. But the fact that wives could be drawn on from somewhere provided a significant and crucial contrast with the Anglicans.

The Anglican church on the Reef developed a pattern of white ministry among Africans very different from the other two churches in that virtually no married couples worked as missionaries throughout the period before the Second World War. Shaw and Parker were both bachelors during their ministry at St. Cyprian's Church in Johannesburg, while Donald Stowell was only priest in Sophiatown with his wife for a few months in 1931. All the other African congregations on the Rand were under the oversight of the Community of the Resurrection, brought out by Bishop Carter after the South African War to take charge of mission work. The continued leadership of this religious order throughout the period, including its assumption of responsibility for the Sophiatown church from 1934, must be seen as the foundation of the extensive recruitment of single women by the Anglican

Church: celibate monks cannot have wives, so once female assistance had come to be seen as necessary, since there were no other priests with wives working among Africans, women had to be brought from England.

The very large numbers involved are not a factor of celibate male leadership alone, however; the Anglicans' superior financial resources contributed to the high recruitment total even more than did short individual terms. The first Anglican women missionaries were sent out with the help of an SPG grant, and the Society continued to support women running the activities started by the pioneers, though diocesan and government money (grants to qualified teachers) supplemented these funds. Dorothy Maud's Ekutuleni work was financed by funds she raised in England and South Africa. Both sets of work benefited from a number of voluntary workers, who contributed all or part of the cost of their board and lodging from private means. It is a reflection of the social classes from which the other two missions were drawn that neither had offers like this. Money to maintain female missionaries had to come from the church in South Africa, Britain or America, or it would not come at all. This is why the reluctance of the Women's Auxiliary of the Wesleyan Methodists to enter a fresh field outside the East in the early years of the century seemed so damaging and made Transvaal Chairman Burnet's repeated pleas so infuriated. It was not until over two decades later, when a final offer of support from the British women had had to be shelved owing to legal obstacles in Johannesburg, that local support was sufficient to finance the appointment of a woman worker.[3] It still remains surprising that one of the two largest churches on the Reef was so thinly represented as regards women missionaries and

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3 MMS 839, Burnet to Hartley, 1 June, 12 Sept. 1907, 8 March 1908, 14 Aug. 1911; MMS 1052, Miss Bradford to Mrs. Allcock, 7 July 1922, Committee to Carter, 9 July 1924, Allcock to Miss Bradford, 21 Nov. 1928.

was more on the staffing level of smaller missions like the ABM or the Swiss Mission,[4] than of its rival, the Anglicans.

Having seen how the female recruitment demand was structured not simply by perceived missionary needs but also by financial resources and the existing deployment of married couples, the individual reasons advanced for offering to supply that demand must be considered. Of the five American Board wives, only Clara Bridgman showed any independent missionary motivation, no doubt partly attributable to her upbringing as a missionary's daughter in Japan. She recorded for the Board that from early childhood she had longed to go into missionary work, her 'deepest desire' since adolescence having been 'to come into a closer union with Christ and to "bear much fruit".' She had been a member for six years of the Student Volunteer Movement, founded in the late nineteenth century to encourage students to offer for missionary service.

For the other women, becoming a missionary was a consequence of marriage. For the nature of the service she felt qualified to render, Dora Phillips marked 'Wife of a missionary' on her application form in 1917, and the terminology indicates that the conception of the married woman's task - to minister to her husband rather than to the converted - had changed little since the previous century. Her stated motive for going was simply 'Because I am the wife of Mr. Phillips', though she explained further, 'I am not a student volunteer, but I am very much interested in my husband's work and shall do my part, wherever that takes us.' Mrs. Goodenough just as earnestly desired to do God's will and would

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4 Swiss Mission Papers 26/1, Johannesburg Annual Reports 1909-37, mention three missionary wives and four single women. The Dutch Reformed Church staff must have been the smallest, the lone missionary's wife taking responsibility once African women had formed prayer groups. DRC Archives, Verslae van Kompound Sending 1905-46, especially reports for 1922, 1926.

accompany her husband to China 'heartily' if God called, though she could not envisage managing more than her domestic responsibilities: 'Still to make a Christian home in a heathen land will be something.' Laura Christeson's sudden interest in missionary work which so surprised the headmaster of the school at which she taught, was clearly primarily due to her engagement to a younger fellow staff member who had been accepted by the ABM. Like Dora Phillips, she recorded no Christian message of her own on the form: 'I subscribe to the statement of my future husband, Mr. H. B. Catlin.' Katherine Taylor admitted candidly, 'I do not think I should have ever thought of being a missionary if Mr. Taylor had not been so enthusiastic'. However, her reason for going to the mission field - 'to tell them that sit in darkness of the wondrous love of Jesus and to add my mite to helping on His Kingdom' - was more fervently expressed than the duty of the wife as mere helpmeet might require.[5] Even this handful of missionary wives provides a range of motivation from various shades of pious wifely dutifulness through to a strong autonomous sense of vocation that would probably have issued in missionary service even without marriage to a man similarly minded.

The two single women ABM appointees, though taken on within a few years of each other in the aftermath of the First World War, represented approaches to evangelism that were really a generation apart. Alice Weir's fundamentalist Scottish background inspired a theologically conservative

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5 ABC: 6 v.40, Personal History etc. Clara Davis Bridgman, 15 Feb. 1897; v.154, Application for Missionary Appointment Dora Phillips, 12 April 1917; v.29, Mrs. Goodenough to Dr. Alden, 23 Dec. 1879; v.89, Application Anna Laura Christeson, 12 Nov. 1919; v.46, K. M. G. Taylor to Dr. Daniels, 20 Jan., 10 March 1899.

motivation - bringing 'to those who are still in darkness...the Gospel of Hope'. She had been keenly interested in missions for some time, having special friends long at work in China and India, and joined the ABM full-time after three years of helping with the Sunday school. Ruth Cowles had a longer missionary ancestry than her aunt Clara Bridgman, her Bridgman grandparents having been Board missionaries in Natal from the 1860's. Ruth grew up at Adams College, the chief ABM school in Natal, where her parents were missionaries and there her missionary purpose 'was born and fostered'. She trained as a nurse to be of more use. Her belief in the effectiveness of ministering to physical needs in opening the way for spiritual ministry situates her in the new theological currents moving missionaries like her uncle F. B. Bridgman and Ray Phillips especially.[6]

The wives of Methodist ministers did not have to give an account of themselves in the same way as the American Board wives. We thus have no explicit record of their missionary motivation. However, as ministers to a church with members of both races and spending some part of their career attached to white congregations, the husbands were not lifelong missionaries as the ABM men unequivocally were. Burnet and Allcock both had long periods of ministry in Britain before and after their chairmanship of the Transvaal district; their wives simply accompanied them abroad to another part of the church as required. Two of the wives, at least, came out from Britain to marry men already installed in an African ministry, so that Ellen Cox and Winifred Grant, who participated enthusiastically in African church life, were presumably favourably disposed to missionary work.

For the three single women appointed briefly in the 1920's for work

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6 ABC: 15.4 v.48, 15.5 v.3, Weir to Miss Lamson, 2 March 1918; ABC: 6 v.92, especially Cowles to Calder, 5 Sept. 1919.

among African Methodist girls, prior familiarity with Johannesburg and its church life was a key stimulus. None of the candidates was recruited through the missionary society. Florence Brown's arrival in December 1929, which launched in earnest the schemes outlined for these predecessors, is traceable to the friendship between her two married sisters, living in Johannesburg, and the Grants, lively and prominent leaders of Reef African church life. She was suited to the job as she had started training for Sunday school work after quitting dressmaking with the verdict, 'You make money but you lose your soul.'[7]

The large group of Anglican missionary candidates presents a patchy picture again. Of the nearly forty women associated with Ekutuleni in this period, only for Dorothy Maud and Winifred Munton do we have a written reason for offering recorded at the time, or indeed personal papers of the detail comparable with the ABM. However, as twenty-four were intended 'short-stayers', no explanation of a life-commitment to the mission field could be required in the circumstances. They came for much more ad hoc reasons - to get out of England for a while; as a final fling after never going away alone throughout a life of caring for relatives; drawn by family ties (one was Parker's cousin, another Miss Maud's); for a short visit and convalescence.[8] Most importantly, the friendship networks of Dorothy Maud and other long-stayers operated to secure this temporary staff. Of the thirty-four women sent to Johannesburg through SPG channels, only twenty filled in application forms which have survived and of those for only

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7 MMS 842, Levy to Burnet, 22 March 1922; 1052, Allcock to Miss Bradford, 21 Nov. 1928; Interview, Florence Brown, 6 Oct. 1977.

8 Interview, Clare Lawrance, 31 Aug. 1977; letters from A. Sheppard, B. Tredgold, Rev. A. Hunter, 1979. I am particularly indebted to the latter two for their help in filling in what information they could on Ekutuleni staff lists.

twelve, i.e. just over a third, is the answer to the question, 'What led you to offer yourself for Missionary work overseas?' attached.

Virtually all these dozen claimed that they had been interested for some years in missionary work but had hitherto been prevented from taking action by their own diffidence and sense of unworthiness, or by home claims, frequently the illness of close relatives whom they had been obliged to nurse in some cases for many years. The fact that they were now free of such ties and had no-one whom it was their duty to tend or maintain, meant that there was no reasonable obstacle to their going. C. Mabel Jones, one month widowed, summed up her conviction of her call in typical fashion: 'Because I know the need of workers is great and I have no ties which prevent me from offering myself.' Rowena Oslar's logic was equally simple: 'I am free so I can go.'[9] These unmarried women saw their lives in terms of ministering to others' needs rather than fulfilling personal potential. The need for missionaries was there; women go where they are needed, thus if no-one needs them at home, which has first priority, they must respond to the need abroad.

The mission propaganda machine definitely helped recruit such women: two impressive missionary meetings stirred one; for another, it was an encouraging item in the SPG's The Mission Field.[10] A few candidates had belonged briefly to mission study circles or associations, though only three had joined the Missionary Preparation Union and two the Student Volunteer Missionary Union.[11] The World Call to the Church, a sustained

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9 USPG Dossiers (hereafter Dos) 2285, 2398 (application forms). See also 2292.

10 Dos 2398, 2285.

11 Dos 2348, 2361, 1562, 2049.

Anglican mission propaganda, recruitment and fund-raising campaign of the mid-1920's, spurred on Dorothy Maud, Coelia Parker and Mary Phillips to offer to the SPG.[12]

Almost half of the SPG women on whom detailed dossiers exist, were drawn into missionary work through knowledge of a special need in South Africa, while as many again expressed interest in work in Asia initially (Table 2). However, a preference for South Africa did not guarantee a long stay, while a woman who had favoured China, for example, gave thirty years' service in South Africa and lived on there through her retirement, helping out at a church school. At least ten of the almost one hundred missionaries from the three churches had been born or brought up in South Africa, but locals remained a minor element. The SWM discussed earnestly why so few South African girls came forward as missionaries, but one member concluded that the off-putting manner of some missionaries, the racial prejudices of South African whites and inadequate publicity of existing work were jointly responsible.[13]

Spiritual motivation was expressed in different individual ways. Early candidates like Amy Kent and Miss Oslar, who were offering their practical housekeeping skills and teaching experience among girls, did not greatly stress the need for evangelism. Few put it as starkly as Phyllis Mann during the First War: 'Because it is gross selfishness to enjoy the priceless blessings of the Church without trying to share them with those who are "perishing in darkness and ignorance", and "the power of Satan".'

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12 A. Ashley, Peace-Making in South Africa. The Life and Work of Dorothy Maud (Bognor Regis, 1980), 8; Dos 2402, 2759. Coelia Parker's sister, uncle and cousin were all involved in mission work in China: see reference from B. Forth in 2402.

13 SWM Journal (June 1930), 14-15.

Dorothy Maud, by contrast with this older view of conversion as a desperate rescue operation, characteristically took a wide and positive view of the Christian life. At the bottom of her desire to be a missionary, which had been steadily growing since her early teens, lay 'a desire to obey Jesus Christ, and to try to set free His Love and Power for everyone as the only hope of their happiness and the only hope of progress for the world.' Her sparkling eloquence in explaining the meaning of Holy Communion underlined the sacramentalism she shared with many of the outstanding High Church Anglicans of that generation. Not even spiritual motivation was always expressed in terms of others' needs, however. One woman, who later resigned to test her vocation as a nun, saw the missionary life partly as a stimulus to personal devotional development: 'a clearer and more definite following of Our Lord...a life which would force me to concentrate on the things that matter most'.[14]

A thoughtful perusal of candidates' stated reasons for applying confirms the recent observation of a researcher into religious motivation: 'Not all motives are avowed or avowable, not all are present in the conscious mind and, sometimes, motives are claimed or ascribed to mask self-interest or to persuade and manipulate.'[15] For a start, no doubt the simple offer of the woman free to meet the need must be partly decoded for some, in that the desire to make a fresh start somewhere new was more acceptable for both a missionary and a woman if phrased in terms of unselfish devotion to the needs of others. Certain candidates were explicit about their desire for a new beginning, all the same, or else those interviewing them

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14 Dos 2348, 2361, 2402.

15 Ecclesiastical History Society. Studies in Church History vol. 15. D. Baker (ed.), Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian (Oxford, 1978), xv.

perceived how the missionary offer marked a decisive moment in a life that had thus far been relatively aimless. May Brazier, offering in 1919, had in some way been awakened by her experiences during the war, which filled her with a desire to make the best of her life and 'surrender it as a thankoffering to the Work of God'. Phyllis Mann's restlessness showed itself in her unhappiness in her teaching job and her indecision in considering entering a sisterhood while also approaching the SPG. Two clergymen's daughters who offered in the 1920's provide insight into the lives of middle class girls educated mostly at home and continuing to stay on there rather than seeking employment. The Candidates' Department considered Frieda Hewson 'unawakened in any direction. She has never desired a profession, never taken any definite training', but she had 'suddenly woken up to the fact with regret "she is rather old for any job anywhere"'. The dreamy Mary Phillips needed 'speeding up...to be cranked up' for she had 'lived too long an indefinite life at home under the eye of a critical and awe-inspiring Mother'.[16] The fact that mission work might involve travel to unusual and warm places abroad frankly increased the lure of a new start for some.[17] The Society was not credulous, though, where self-interest was too prominent or a 'love of souls' not evident enough in a candidates' motives, and its judgement was vindicated in at least three cases of women who went or returned to Johannesburg at local request against the recommendation of headquarters - all proved unsatisfactory within a year

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16 Dos 2057; 2348, Confidential Report...1914; 2240, Interviews M. D. Western, C. C. Morgan; 2759, Reference C. H. Wood.

17 Dos 2402, 2240, 2057.

or two, and stirred up great acrimony.[18]

The SPG did not send single women under twenty-five years old abroad, and preferred them to be no older than thirty-five for a first appointment. Not surprisingly, the ages at which women first offered for the mission field fell largely within this band. Across all three societies, if we exclude the married women and the Ekutuleni temporary workers, information on the ages of nearly half the remaining candidates is available (Table 3). It is significant that of the twenty women offering in that critical ten-year band, fifteen were aged between twenty-eight and thirty-three. By that time it would be clear that marriage was unlikely, in England at any rate; those in employment would have had probably a decade in the job, time enough for its drawbacks to have revealed themselves. Both in personal and occupational terms, if a woman wanted to make a change, it could not be left too late.

b) Social Origins

Despite the large number of Anglicans of whose social background we know nothing, information is available on over a third of the total group as regards their father's occupation (Table 4). Only the Methodist woollen-mill worker from the Midlands was clearly a working class father. Two women who were orphaned respectively in infancy and childhood probably had working class mothers; they ended up in a foster home and an institution, with suspiciously little known about their fathers.[19] With the rest, the fathers span a whole range of positions from the lower middle through to the solidly prosperous professional middle classes. The sixteen clergymen vary from unbeneficed to episcopal status, the tradesmen from a pawnbroker

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18 Dos 2491, 2398, 2240 and subsequent correspondence.

19 ABC: 6 v.46, K. M. Taylor to Dr. Daniels, 20 Jan. 1899; Dos 1562, B. A. Vallender to SPG, 3 April 1924.

through small shopkeepers - tobacconist, ironmonger, grocer - to a wholesale merchant. 'Inland Revenue' or 'Stock Exchange' as answers are unenlightening about the occupational level reached, so collective labels are only approximate. Nevertheless, even from this relatively small and geographically specific sample, the impression gained is that neither the English upper classes nor the working class offered to the SPG,[20] while professional middle class daughters became prominent between the wars; the lower middle class generally provided Anglican candidates prior to that time and Nonconformist candidates throughout the period.

Isherwood suggests that the restricted scope allowed to single women missionaries in view of contemporary stereotypes and excessive male scruples about propriety explains why women 'were rarely innovators of missionary methods'.[21] Class background also played a part. Of the two outstanding pioneers and women of enterprise among Witwatersrand Anglicans, Julia Gilpin appears to have owed her leadership qualities to multiple training and long experience of responsibilities rather than to elevated social origins. A qualified nurse employed in London and Gibraltar, she then trained as a deaconess, and worked in South London, as a missionary in Delhi and as head of the SPG Hostel (training women missionaries), before offering in 1907 to go to Johannesburg in response to Latimer Fuller's appeal at a big SPG meeting in Exeter Hall. She launched the three key elements of the Reef Anglican approach to African women which endured for three or four decades: women's religious meetings, a girls' boarding school and a young women's hostel.[22] The initiatives of the 1920's among children

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20 The evangelical CMS was considered more suitable for those of 'humbler social position', in the 1890's at any rate, from which time a number of working class girls were recruited. Isherwood, 'Single Women', 5, 153.

21 Ibid., 239-40.

22 SWM Journal (April 1944), 12.

and youth owed more to Nonconformists and the non-missionary, Mrs. Jones. The second great female Anglican pioneer, Dorothy Maud, signalled a new development in recruitment. Though without the Deaconess's special training, she had an attractive, inspiring personality and extensive experience of public speaking for SPG and the Girls' Diocesan Association, a church society for leisured young women. These gifts and her privileged position as a bishop's daughter of good family (her brothers went to Eton), gave her social contacts out of the ordinary which were invaluable in her founding of two settlements in African areas.

Although detailed information is sparse on the women Dorothy attracted to staff the houses in Sophiatown and Orlando, their broad contrast with the candidates selected up to 1920 is clear. These were women more likely to have some independent means and therefore leisure, to have lived at home and gained no special qualifications, but to be cultured with wide interests like music and drama. The individual confidence and group solidarity of Dorothy and her friends made them more at ease with Johannesburg's rich, liberal citizens than their lower middle class missionary predecessors and indeed contemporaries were. This difference influenced the philosophy behind Maud's work, which was carried out explicitly in cooperation with sympathetic whites who gave regular voluntary assistance with an ever-expanding programme of activities. Part of the explanation for the freedom and inclination of this group of by and large solidly middle class women to spend shorter or longer periods of their thirties and forties in South Africa, lies in the destruction of young officers on the Western Front and the shortage of potential marriage partners for a whole female generation. They came from precisely the social group which, unlike the lower middle class, still regarded paid public employment as unseemly for its daughters and which prepared them

basically for marriage as a life work.

For two of the Methodist women, social origins were certainly influential. Mabel Allcock came from a learned London family; her father edited the Methodist Recorder and then Wesley's Journals. When marriage took her to city mission churches in the slums of Leeds and Blackburn, she learnt to run mothers' meetings among women of a very different, much tougher background than her own. Her firm managerial approach to the organisation of the African women's Manyano in the Transvaal must have drawn on previous experience of leadership across the class divide. Florence Brown, the dressmaker daughter of a millhand, was not nearly as successful as Dorothy Maud at mobilising financial support from white Johannesburg. Both the fact that she was working alone and her humbler origins made her demands on the 'posh people' less ambitious and less well rewarded.[23]

Among the American Board missionaries, social origins were deemed to make a difference. Alice Weir, the Scottish grocer's daughter who, after a plain high school education, learnt dressmaking and worked as a buyer in a department store, wrote reports on her work which the Mission's Women's Department found painfully sparse and uninformative. Descriptions of this sort - 'Mrs. Bridgman addressed the women's meeting yesterday. 23 women were present. It was a most encouraging meeting'-were pedestrian, lacking colour and detail. Though Mrs. Bridgman praised her loyal dependability as an 'energetic, tireless, devoted worker' and considered her lack of tertiary education 'largely offset by her practical common-sense and her business experience and her deep spirituality and earnestness', she sympathised

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23 Interviews, Ruth Allcock, 21 Aug. 1977, F. Brown, 25 Oct. 1977.

about the inadequate letters, admitting that she often felt in Miss Weir the lack of college training in the latter's inability at times to tabulate her work and keep perspective.[24]

This example makes clear how social origins are not simply a matter of father's occupation. A woman's potential contribution and status are as much a product of her own education and work experience, opportunities not unrelated, naturally, to her parents' class position. Four of the ABM women had a college education (Table 5) and, though individual personality must also be taken into account - Mrs. Bridgman and her niece were 'both perfect dynamos of energy'[25] - the confidence it gave them stands out. The energetic, innovative and devoted service of three of these graduates, Clara Bridgman, Dora Phillips and Ruth Cowles, with virtually a hundred years in Johannesburg between them, was the core of the Board's work among women and children in the city and extended in its impact far beyond their own church members. Two of them were of course members of the notable and long-serving Bridgman missionary clan. Mrs. Catlin, who dropped out of high school early to concentrate on studies at a music conservatory, poured out to Rheinallt Jones on his visit to the USA the sense of inferiority bestowed on her in this company during her temporary Johannesburg posting (1924-7) - her experiences of 'Mrs. Bridgman's stiff righteousness, Miss Weir's brusque bossiness and Ray Phillips' brutal hostility', and how she felt 'paralysed when Mrs. Bridgman was about and everyone seemed to have been trained and I wasn't'.[26] Educational snobbery in the Americans provides

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24 ABC: 15.5 v.5, Weir to Miss Lamson, 4 Feb. 1921, C. Bridgman to Miss Buckley, 2 May 1923; ABC: 6 v.182, Mrs. Bridgman on Alice Weir.

25 ABC: 15.4 v.41, Taylor to Riggs, 15 Nov. 1927.

26 ABC: 6 v.89, Application, A. Christeson; Witwatersrand University Library (WUL), Rheinallt Jones Papers, A394 C1/23, Jones to his wife, 23 Feb. 1930.

the equivalent of the British stress on birth, wealth and professional job status. Katherine Taylor, wife of the gifted minister James Dexter Taylor and similarly lacking a college degree, took a noticeable back seat during her twenty years on the Reef. An unassuming orphan brought up in austere circumstances, trained and employed as a dressmaker prior to marriage, she lacked both Mrs. Bridgman's competent forcefulness and Mrs. Phillips's youthful verve.

The American women who had been to college form a far larger proportion of the total Johannesburg sample for their church than do the couple of Anglican women with university-level education. Perhaps this was because American female higher education began a good generation before British - in 1837 at Oberlin, which three of the ABM workers attended.[27] Just under a third of the Anglican women for whom educational details exist, are known to have passed the highest secondary examinations, but no doubt more had in fact, since two-thirds had some form of tertiary education (teaching, nursing or university study). One Anglican had only elementary education, and the comments in her interviews made clear that an application from someone with such low qualifications was unusual.[28] The Methodist missionary who had left school at fourteen[29] would probably also not have reached high school. Both women were still alive in South Africa in retirement and interested in church life as actively fifty years later. For both women, mission service clearly opened up stimulating and enjoyable opportunities, especially for the work with children both loved. It brought them responsibilities and organisational status (one as eventual secretary of the Wayfarer youth

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27 A. Simmons, 'Education and Ideology in Nineteenth-Century America: The Response of Educational Institutions to the Changing Role of Women', in B. A. Carroll, Liberating Women's History (Urbana, 1976), 120.

28 Dos 1562.

29 Interview, F. Brown, 6 Oct. 1977.

movement in the Transvaal, the other head of African Sunday school work for Johannesburg Anglicans) which with their humble social origins, would probably not have arisen at home.

In general, then, these women missionaries were not drawn from the most poorly educated; virtually all had secondary education, although study beyond that level was geared towards teacher training for most, especially before the 1920's. All the medical personnel came to Johannesburg from the late 1920's onwards; otherwise, neither the lowest nor the highest academic qualifications were much represented among these female candidates. By contrast with the American enthusiasm for a college education, exhibited as early as the 1870's by Caroline Goodenough, English women who obtained university entrance qualifications even thirty or forty years later did not go on to university, no doubt for both financial and social reasons.

Not surprisingly, most highly represented among prior occupations of those Johannesburg missionaries who had not already been in some other kind of Christian work, was teaching, and that predominantly at the elementary level (Table 6). The only clear working class employment among the Anglicans was that of the candidate already singled out for her rudimentary schooling. She had worked successively as a parlourmaid, 'useful maid', children's maid, 'assistant matron' of a home and 'lady nurse'.[30] The two dressmakers and the shopgirl, herself a former dressmaker, of the other two churches could also be categorised as of the working class in occupation. The prominence of teachers and medical personnel confirms Potter's comment about how women missionaries were increasingly recruited, as the nineteenth century closed, from service occupations rather than solely from that group of unoccupied ladies of culture, independent means and no home claims, so

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30 Dos 1562.

favoured previously.[31] Nevertheless, six of the Anglican women are known to have been simply 'at home' prior to offering for the mission field, and this was probably true of others, especially among the Ekutuleni recruits. Only two of the married women are known to have worked before marriage; most of them married from home in their early twenties or younger.

Elementary schoolteachers were prominent among early Anglican female missionary recruits especially. While theirs had been essentially a working class occupation in the 1850's, by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as the profession itself gained in status and training improved, it was becoming middle class from below, through the upward social mobility of college-trained working class and lower middle class elementary schoolmistresses.[32] Elementary teaching was an attractive proposition and real opportunity for bright lower middle class girls (like Rowena Oslar, determinedly self-improving and out to get as many certificates as possible despite her slender means), but such teachers tended to be stereotyped as socially pretentious by the prosperous middle class and the old professions like the clergy, who debated whether elementary teaching was a genteel occupation. Their ambivalent social position may well have encouraged the pious among such teachers to offer for elementary teaching in mission schools abroad, where they would be freer of such status ambiguities. The Chief Inspector opined in 1911 that English elementary teachers were 'as a rule, uncultured and imperfectly educated', many, if not most, being 'creatures of tradition and routine'.[33] Elementary teachers

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31 Potter, 'Social Origins', 229.

32 F. Widdowson, Going Up Into the Next Class: Women and Elementary Teacher Training, 1840-1914 (London, 1980).

33 Quoted in S. J. Curtis and M. E. A. Boultwood, An Introductory History of English Education since 1800 (London, 1966), 175.

clearly suffered even well into the 1920's from their lowly image, as reports of two SPG interviews with a clergyman's daughter in 1926 show:

> Though an elementary teacher she herself comes from quite a different background. She is intelligent and interested in many things outside her profession... is in many ways above the average of our students.
>
> ...a lady in every sense of the term and well educated and refined: she is very different from the ordinary elementary teacher, and is much more the sort of woman you would expect to find at Cheltenham or Wycombe Abbey.[34]

c) Training

Not only was teaching the most common paid employment of which these women missionaries had experience, but the previous, mostly unpaid, church work they had done was overwhelmingly among children. Over half had taught Sunday school while just under half of those forty-one on whom we have information had helped run religious youth movements like the Girls' Friendly Society, girls' clubs in settlements and Guides and Scouts in England, or the YWCA and Christian Endeavour in America (Table 7). Mid-nineteenth century accounts of female church work, perhaps with the mature married woman in mind, give prominence to visiting and fund-raising. By the early twentieth century, these had been strikingly superseded, for the relatively youthful single woman at any rate, by religious and social instruction of the young. Though most of the women sent before 1920 had Sunday school experience, these statistics give most point to the development of Sunday schools and youth movements in Johannesburg after that date, when the burgeoning African child population necessitated such expansion and intersected with the growing background experience in youth work which women missionaries brought with them to Africa. It is also worth noting that only two women - an Anglican widow and a Methodist minister's wife -

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34 Dos 2402, C. C. Morgan and E. Courtenay-West.

were recorded as having experience of religious meetings with married women.[35] Four of the wives left the USA in their early or mid-twenties without such experience, but as married women, increasing maturity gave them some common ground and basis for authority with African women prayer union members. For the single women, this gap in experience continued to be a glaring deficiency which few could remedy by force of personality alone.

Apart from deaconesses, who were already trained, most of the Anglican women sent out by the SPG were given a special year of missionary training (Table 8). Up to 1910, candidates went to the SPG Hostel in Wandsworth. From then until the mid-1920's, women were trained by religious communities, either of deaconesses or nuns. It was even suggested that the Community of St. Mary the Virgin's House at Wantage was abandoned for training as so many potential missionary candidates found vocations as nuns.[36] The early Reef missionaries certainly wore a grey uniform reminiscent of a simplified habit, though without a veil, and claimed that it afforded them 'such a protection' in the locations, they doubted if they would be allowed in otherwise.[37] From the mid-1920's, the pattern changed again: the SPG sent women candidates to the College of the Ascension, close to the Selly Oak College outside Birmingham.

By comparison with the Anglican, Nonconformist training appears meagre; the ABM women had virtually no specific missionary training, though Ruth Cowles had dual professional qualifications as a teacher and a nurse, and Mrs. Phillips attended lectures on missions with her husband at Yale School of Religion;[38] Florence Brown completed only a term of training for Sunday

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35 Mrs. Allcock, Interview, R. Allcock; Mrs. C. M. Jones, Dos 2285.

36 USPG, Committee of Women's Work (CWW), Letters Received, C. Harries to Miss MacGregor, 16 Aug. 1921.

37 CWW, Kent to Saunders, 27 Oct. 1915. By the mid-1920's it was no longer worn; see C. Parker to Miss Morgan, 6 Aug. 1926, in Dos 2402.

38 See over.

school work before her Methodist appointment. This contrast probably owes something, yet again, to the superior material and financial resources of the Anglican church, but also reflects a Nonconformist confidence that proven zeal is more important than formal training. Considering the long service of some of these Nonconformist women, the Anglican outlay on training might not be regarded as worthwhile, since a number of SPG women gave up after only one term of service.

The Anglican training homes gave Biblical and doctrinal teaching, as well as practical experience of leading Sunday school and Bible classes or taking responsibility for penitentiary work (with unmarried mothers) and visiting. A change of emphasis over time is discernable. Candidates before the First World War had instruction in practical domestic and nursing skills which later were obviously regarded as unnecessary.[39] Instruction in penitentiary work features mainly in these early reports, too;[40] the approach to unmarried mothers became less punitive after the war, although the township settlements continued to run penitents' classes. It is interesting to note that during the war, candidates began having classes in Comparative Religion and Psychology, along with more orthodox topics like Liturgy, Church History and Old Testament prophets.[41] Mission work was being seen in a broader context. Finally, the training homes themselves sound more cheerful places by the end of the 1920's. It was significant that, particularly in the first couple of decades, the traditional sphere for practising leadership skills was among the surrounding urban poor. Thus when women came to Johannesburg to instruct Africans, a different race, they came with attitudes

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38 ABC: 6 v.154, Application, Dora Phillips.

39 Dos 2018, 2058, 2640, Training Home Reports.

40 For example Dos 2285, in 1910.

41 Dos 2216, 2348, Reports.

and ways of exercising spiritual direction learnt among the working class and lower middle class in England.

Isherwood notes that Victorian CMS women, unlike men, were seldom given language training for mission work, a particularly serious omission as women's education gave them less experience than men of learning a language.[42] The SPG women's language preparation in England seems to have been similarly neglected, though by the late 1920's we read of Mary Phillips going to phonetics classes at the School of Oriental Studies.[43] Their schooling, too, was giving women greater familiarity with foreign languages by then. At least ten of the twenty-two SPG candidates whose application forms were seen, had learnt one, or usually two other languages at school, mostly French and Latin, occasionally French and German. The connection between prior grasp of foreign languages and fluency in new vernaculars is most striking in Dora Earthy, who was unusually fond of and adept at languages. She had tried six by the time she applied to SPG - French, Latin, German, Portuguese, Italian and Spanish - and used them in her job, cataloguing scientific papers from all over the world for the Royal Society. In the Transvaal, she acquired Xhosa, Sotho and probably Dutch; in southern Mozambique she learnt Chopi, collecting folk tales in between her mission duties. In retirement, she took up Arabic 'as a mental pastime (instead of cross-word puzzles)', then Greek, and compiled a little textbook for Hebrew when she was over eighty![44]

Most women found it very difficult to learn a language on the job. One frankly admitted it was dull struggling through lessons. Another tried

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42 Isherwood, 'Single Women', 247.

43 Dos 2759, Training Home Report Autumn 1928.

44 Dos 2640, Application Form; Earthy to C. Morgan, 20 Dec. 1934, 9 Sept. 1941; Earthy to de Sausmarez, 12 Feb. 1959.

to learn Tswana without much success and envied the special time given to 'the great Dorothy Maud' for a year's language training in rural Zululand. Dorothy Maud's determination to be properly equipped led her to go subsequently to weekly Sotho lessons at the University together with three others from the Sophiatown mission, after the African clergy 'had a slight dig' at the women missionaries at the Native Conference for only learning Zulu. She sent Margaret Leeke to Basutoland for six months in 1935 to improve her Sotho before taking on leadership of the Orlando mission. They both took weekly Afrikaans lessons too, along with Winifred Munton, no doubt because the Western Areas had a fair sized Coloured population.[45] Nevertheless, it was true that African children were becoming increasingly proficient in English and keen to practise it; as so many women missionaries attained no mastery of vernaculars and were dependent on translators, this served to reinforce the heavy emphasis on work with children of the township missions in the 1930's.

There is no evidence as to whether the Methodist women had much prior experience of language learning, nor that any of the wives became fluent in an African language. Certainly Florence Brown never learnt one, but found it little obstacle because her work was with school children. The American Board, by contrast with both larger missions, no doubt because of its long-established Zulu heartland, took language training seriously for men and women. Ray and Dora Phillips spent a year in Zululand before taking up their appointment on the Reef, and Alice Weir was also sent there for some months to acquire Zulu. The other Reef appointees were even better equipped, having either grown up in Natal or worked at mission stations there for some time before transferring to Johannesburg. Thus, although

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45 Dos 2086, D. Chaplin to C. Morgan, 8 July 1936; Interview, Frances Chilton, 26 Feb. 1978; WUL, CPSA f AB396, Maud newsletter, 17 Aug. 1931.

Caroline Goodenough confessed she had 'never got the mastery of the native language, owing to ill health and many little children', the immediate recollection of Clara Bridgman by an elderly African woman contemporary was of 'a very energetic woman...very fluent in Zulu'.[46]

In the discussion on motivation, the odd early reference to 'heathen darkness' emerged. It was not until the 1920's, it appears, that instruction in the nature of African social organisation was given to any of the women missionaries, and then it was through Rheinallt Jones's Department of Bantu Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. Attending these classes was yet another activity, apart from Joint Council participation and youth movements, which brought missionaries of the three most active Protestant societies together under the aegis of Jones and his wife. For example, on an African Studies vacation course in 1925, as well as Africans like Selope Thema, among the thirty-five students were the Anglican priest Francis Hill, the Methodist ministers Carter and Grant, Edith Saltmarsh, Caro Happer and Elsie Vigor, all Anglicans, and the Primitive Methodist minister's wife, Katie Kidwell.[47] Scholarly articles were contributed exclusively by male Reef missionaries,[48] although Dora Earthy had a number of pieces published in Bantu Studies and Africa based on researches after leaving the Reef and her book, Valenge Women, was brought out by the International Africa Institute in 1933.

SPG and ABM candidates had to send names of several referees, and reports were also written after interviews with the SPG staff. The language

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46 ABC: 15.4 v.30, Mrs. Goodenough to Dr. Strong, 19 June 1910; Interview, Mrs. Mavimbela, 3 March 1978.

47 WUL, A394 C1/20, Students to University Senate, 17 July 1925.

48 See articles by E. W. Grant and J. D. Taylor in Bantu Studies, III (1927-9) and IX (1935).

of these references bears examination for its sensitivity to social class. While the candidate's religious suitability had to be attested to, which made 'earnest' the second most popular adjective of recommendation, the even greater frequency of the most favoured epithet, 'refined', is significant. Williams, discussing the establishment by the CMS of different missionary training colleges for 'ladies' and 'women', has remarked on the sharper social awareness among female as opposed to male candidates.[49] Perhaps because women at this time were not invariably in paid employment, their status derived not from their own occupation but partly from their father's and predominantly from more intangible social phenomena like their manner, speech and appearance. Refinement was largely a measurement of gentility and 'ladylikeness' but spirituality seemed at times to be almost a corollary of this refinement, as if only 'ladies' could be real Christians. Thus the training home reported 'There is evidence of very real growth in unselfishness, in humility, and in a hundred little ways she seems to be more refined and other worldly'.[50] This was a girl of whom it had earlier been noted, 'Speaks with an accent'. Of Emily Aylen, one referee wrote, 'She is a lady and a very pleasant person to live with', while another commented, 'she is cultured, nice-minded; her tone and manners are right, needing no description'. SPG staff also stressed these aspects, for instance writing of May Brazier, 'quiet gentle refined voice and manner and there was a real humility and sincerity in all her statements'. They sometimes disagreed among themselves, though. One interviewer thought Amy Kent, significantly a former governess and elementary schoolteacher, 'not altogether a lady but refined and quiet', while another rejoined that

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49 Williams, 'Recruitment and Training', 305.

50 Dos 2348, Report Summer 1915 (emphasis added).

she was 'inately (sic) a lady, because entirely without provoking self-consciousness or smallness - no mannerisms - very keen - and really in earnest'.[51]

The later SPG interviewers were prepared to trust to a favourable impression in person, even if their class awareness could not be suppressed. Frances Chilton, an orphan trained in housework after an elementary education, was pronounced 'a delightful surprise' and 'a wonder - she might have had all the advantages of a good home and expensive education from the look of her'. Another staff member could not 'help thinking that heredity came in somewhere: I should certainly have put her down as a lady - and a cultured one at that'. It is hardly surprising, then, that during her subsequent training, she was 'obsessed with the fact of her having worked in a domestic capacity becoming known'. Catherine Harries also upset preconceptions and was reported on enthusiastically as 'a very attractive candidate: bright, intelligent, forthcoming, thoroughly alive physically, mentally, spiritually, she has "personality" in a full degree...a remarkable person coming from a very "bourgeois" home, and not a happy one, and the child of an unsatisfactory father'. (The father was a Cardiff ironmonger, and Catherine had 'exactly £5 in the world' prior to setting out for Johannesburg, when her outfit would cost £80, so the SPG had to give her money and rummage in the gift cupboard to equip her).[52]

While the American testimonials characteristically stress the cheerfulness, sunny disposition and sociable nature of ABM candidates, sensitivity to degrees of gentility was not absent. There was 'never any easy going familiarity' about Dora Phillips, assured one referee. 'She

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51 Dos 2018; 2057, Interview, C. Morgan; 2292.

52 Dos 1562; 2220, Interviews and letter from Miss Bewley, 19 Aug. 1920.

was always a lady'. Mrs. Goodenough was described as 'a very superior lady' with 'a strong character, not wanting in delicacy' while Mr. Catlin's fiancee was 'refined and pleasing in every way'.[53]

The comments of the Anglican missionary training homes on the spiritual, social and practical progress of their candidates provide a fascinating composite portrait of the qualities deemed desirable for the job. Women who could live considerately with others were at a premium, as it was against SPG policy to have single women living alone. Excessively strong-minded, self-confident individuals were suspect, and probably treated more stringently than men of that ilk would have been. It was both fitting and necessary for women to be able to cooperate and follow rather than strive to lead. In the field, they would have to take orders from ministers or established women leaders. A clergyman's reference revealed both of these assumptions: 'her manner (I'm glad to say) is not that of "a leading woman". I am sure she would work patiently or pleasantly under others.' It was with these desires for harmonious community living in mind that the training homes wrote reports like 'chief fault undue self-confidence' or 'too self-centred and introspective...wounds and aggravates others - emotional and sentimental, with no real love. Wants to be first and to manage'. Another pre-war candidate's reports charted her progressive subjugation: 'slightly less assertive...Needs much self-discipline... Quieter in manner and trying hard to improve'.[54]

In a sense, the unusual woman was more of a problem than the pliable,

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53 ABC: 6 v.154, from F. F. Exner; v.29, H. Mead to Alden, 13 Dec. 1879; v.9, from H. F. Cutler.

54 Dos 2759, from Bishop of Southampton; CWW 79, A. M. Young, 23 July 1904; CWW 89, A. E. Bridge, E. Williams.

mediocre one. 'She has plenty of originality, with a strain of defiance which she has not fully conquered', the College reported of the capable woman who went on to head nursery school work in Sophiatown. The training home's judgement was confirmed when the woman they described as follows: 'very intense nature...most astonishingly versatile...strong and wiry... a bit of a fanatic...has just the very faults which make life in a Mission Station so often almost impossible', in fact subsequently had to leave because she insisted on obstinately ploughing a lonely furrow, wondering whether her work was appreciated. What one nun termed 'A negative and colourless character', another hastened to assure the SPG was 'a very good little person and ought to be very useful in a subordinate post where no enterprise or initiative is required'. (She in fact gave fourteen years' service to St. Agnes' school!) Her SPG interview rather confirmed the view of elementary teachers as creatures of tradition and routine:

> I thought her very sane and wise...She lives a quiet regular life - perhaps a little wanting in initiative and adventure...I doubt if she has any exceptional powers but would do her own job well, I should say. Seems a peaceful, controlled person.[55]

Good physical health was an important prerequisite for a woman missionary. But psychological health was assessed even more anxiously. The condemnatory catch-all ailment, 'nerves', much concerned superiors. When Dorothy Maud requested a missionary for Sophiatown, she stipulated as the physical requirement, 'Good Constitution and Nerves'. A series of candidates were described as 'highly strung and has a nervous temperament' or 'Probably sensitive - nerves and health a question', and again, 'has undoubtedly a neurotic tendency, is excitable and would easily get overwrought'. The Society must have been glad to hear that other applicants

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55 Dos 2086; 2216, Reports 1915, letters F. Hill, Karney to Saunders, 14 Aug. 1929; 2057, Training Home Reports, Interview by H. M. S. Jones.

were 'In popular language "as strong as a horse"', 'noisy, wholesome, straightforward', 'entirely without nerves', and 'Looked healthy and not nervy'.[56]

As feminist historians point out,[57] female invalidism had varied sources. The mystique of female frailty lured women to see themselves as delicate and sick, though they also sometimes turned this to their own advantage. Doctors benefited from and so validated the hypochondria of bored, unhappy middle class women. Neurasthenia, regarded as a women's disease linked to the reproductive system, was increasingly diagnosed in young single women, reflecting how they were torn between a desire for independence and the demands of convention. On the Reef, as was common at the time, psychological ill-health was vaguely attributed to greater female fragility. 'I think women feel the altitude and the strain of the work even more than men', opined Bishop Furse, 'and once they begin to go to pieces, their progress in that direction becomes rather rapid.' Amy Kent concurred, but considered the strain aggravated by isolation from their own 'race' and by the difficulty of the work. The Methodist Allcock also commented on the 'strange fatality' about missionary wives and their puzzling proneness to crack up under strain. In the case of the ABM, only the poor Catlins suffered serious nervous prostration after their unhappy time in Johannesburg (a prostration which became permanent).[58]

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56 USPG, D, Application Form...Diocese of Johannesburg, 27 July 1934; CWW 89, A. E. Bridge; Dos 2640, 2398, Training Home Reports; 2066, from Rev. P. H. Leary; 2313, College Report; 2379; 2285, Interview.

57 L. Duffin, 'The Conspicuous Consumptive: Woman as an Invalid', in S. Delamont and L. Duffin, The Nineteenth Century Woman. Her Cultural and Physical World (London, 1978); B. Ehrenreich and D. English, Complaints and Disorders. The Sexual Politics of Sickness (London, 1976), 22-46.

58 CWW, Furse to Montgomery, 13 Feb. 1913, Kent to Saunders, 14 July 1919; MMS 843, Allcock to Noble, 15 April 1925; ABC: 15.4 v.38, Riggs to Christophersen, 14 Nov. 1928, 30 Oct. 1929. There had been serious worries about Clara Bridgman's health before she went to the mission

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In view of the concern for harmony among fellow-workers expressed during training, the actual relationships among women missionaries in the field merit examination. They are of interest for two further reasons: if staff were at loggerheads, it would decrease their effectiveness and detract from their Christian witness. Secondly, within the broader context of the social history of women of that class and era, the tensions among them give one a hint of the problems of the single woman in a culture which gears women largely towards marriage as a first-choice lifetime career, and hence towards competition not cooperation with other women.

Amy Kent confessed to a SPG staff member that the Buxton Street headquarters of Johannesburg's Anglican women's work had been known as 'The Cattery' and 'The Matrimonial Agency',[59] two interesting stereotypes of the single woman missionary as either incurably prone to bicker or eager to catch a husband. Kent had in fact just been at the heart of an ugly storm herself, of the sort which might have prompted the cat-fight comparison. It arose out of the not unnatural development of close, indeed devoted, friendships between certain women missionaries. Julia Gilpin, for example, had been accompanied to Johannesburg by Marion Trist, an honorary worker helping the deaconess in any way she could and sparing her unnecessary exertions.[60] Much distressed after her friend's death in 1913, Julia named the Coloured YWCA she founded in Cape Town, the Marion Institute in her memory. Miss Kent was devoted to Rowena Oslar, six years

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field. Physically, it was regretted that there had been no chance to see how she bore the test of childbirth before leaving (her son was born over a decade later). Psychologically, doctors were concerned at the maternal family's history of insanity: Clara's grandmother died of 'melancholia' while her missionary mother committed suicide. ABC: 6 v.40, Jackson to Daniels, 4 March 1897.

59 CWW, Kent to Gurney, 15 Feb. 1916.

60 WW 1908-10, Trist to Miss MacKenzie, 3 Jan. 1909.

her senior, with whom she trained at the SPG Hostel and later worked at St. Agnes' School. Miss Oslar was not returned to the Reef after her first furlough - she was deaf, in a 'jumpy' state, and had proved too authoritarian. However, her best friend contrived to get her back later with the male supervisor's help. This contributed to the ousting of a third, much aggrieved missionary and seems to have made the female companions unwelcome in Transvaal church work after the war.[61]

This episode highlights the problem of the single woman missionary. She was assumed free of any romantic attachment with a male, but too close a relationship with a fellow missionary, to compensate for isolation, could be highly disruptive. Alice Weir and Florence Brown of the ABM and the Methodists were both long-serving single women, but though each lived with a close woman friend for a number of years, as there were no colleagues to offend and the friends were in other employment, the arrangement worked happily.

There continued to be personality clashes at Buxton Street in the late 1920's. Leslie Stoker did not get on with her fellow workers and was too intense; Caro Happer resented younger women supervising her; the amiable Mary Phillips loved her job but found a thick skin was needed to cope with the communal living. However, from 1933, when Agnes Beale and Frances Chilton moved in, normal tranquillity returned, even though there was a considerable age gap between the two.[62] Such tensions were a widespread cause of concern to the church and the problem became increasingly pressing in the 1920's and 1930's, with single women missionaries breaking down physically and nervously within a few years and not returning for a second

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61 CWW, Williams to Saunders, 27 July, 8 and 11 Oct. 1915, 3 Jan. 1916; Kent to Saunders 11 Jan., 23 Aug. and 5 Dec. 1923.

62 CWW, Karney to Dolphin, 25 March 1925, Happer to Saunders, 20 May 1925; Dos 2759, Phillips to Morgan, 9 Nov. 1932; USPG, D, W. Munton to Morgan, 14 June 1933.

term. Florence Allshorn's English retreat house to help women missionaries learn to develop the art of friendship among themselves and avoid becoming 'rabid' about their work, constituted perhaps the most notable attempted solution.[63]

Dorothy Maud's two mission houses seem by and large to have escaped such bitter tensions, though one or two women left, having proved not to have a missionary call. The larger households and more comfortable surroundings obviously helped. One staff member recalled Ekutuleni as 'cool and clean, simply and charmingly furnished', with Dorothy a 'matchless' leader, 'welding her bunch of highly individual people into a loyal and happy family'.[64] There was less austerity, financially, culturally and socially. Buxton Street, by contrast, provided mush harsher working conditions. It was feared that the church starved its first workers. Theodora Williams wrote that 'no raw Kaffir "piccanin" would come as "house boy" for the salary we get'. A visit from headquarters pronounced the building the women lived in 'squalid, and unrestful'; Williams and Dora Earthy were both very anaemic-looking and the SPG threatened to send no more candidates unless these quarters were improved. The new bishop after the war still had a feeling that the women missionaries had 'been looked upon a little bit as "Poor relations", in the Diocese'.[65]

d) Fate

How large a proportion of women in fact ended their missionary service

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63 F. Allshorn, 'Corporate Life on a Mission Station', International Review of Missions, XXIII, 92 (Oct. 1934); J. H. Oldham, Florence Allshorn and the Story of St. Julian's (London, 1951).

64 Ashley, Peace-Making, 44, 39.

65 CWW, Williams to Saunders, 15 Dec. 1912, Furse to Montgomery, 13 Feb. 1913 and to Saunders, 17 Sept. 1913; Miss Phillimore to Gurney, 21 March 1913; Talbot to Saunders, 24 Nov. 1920.

because of some sort of 'breakdown', whether nervous or physical? Ill-health was at times a convenient excuse for an unhappy woman to leave or a tactful euphemism to hide virtual dismissal. Nevertheless, a number of women did genuinely have to retire because of ill-health, detected either by doctors in South Africa or the SPG medical check-up on furlough. The irony so often was that the same woman then lived on to a ripe old age elsewhere. Deaconess Vigor, retired to England in 1933 on doctor's orders, died only in 1968. May Brazier similarly returned in 1934 but lived to 1972.[66] Deaconess Julia had to leave the highveld during the First World War because of a bad heart, but worked on in the dioceses of Cape Town and George, dying in her late eighties in 1948.

Furloughs back in England afforded a convenient way for either the missionary or the society to reconsider and perhaps end the relationship. Two women stayed on after their furlough was up to care for aged parents, an acceptable way of explaining giving up what had lost its attraction in both cases. The Johannesburg male leaders made it clear of two others, to their great distress, that they were not wanted back after furlough.[67] Apart from health and family claims, the most common reasons recorded for single women leaving their Johannesburg work were to marry, become a nun or transfer to another field of mission work. For the other two missions, simple retirement or retrenchment were important too (Table 9).

Mary Phillips's happy confession that she had committed 'the - I suppose unforgivable - sin for women missionaries of becoming engaged to be married', reminds us that termination of appointment on marriage was one of the ways in which marriage was more significant in the lives of women than

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66 Dos 2552, 2057.

67 CWW, Kent to Saunders, 28 April 1919, 18 Feb. 1921; Dos 2348, Mann to Saunders, 1 Jan. 1922; Dos 2398, Saunders to Russell Wells (about Oslar); CWW, Furse to Saunders, 9 Dec. 1915 (of Williams).

of men in the church. Although the SPG legally had no binding power, once women had signed the Declaration of Purpose, promising to give themselves entirely to the mission work to which they were sent for four and a half years, if they married before three years had elapsed, they were expected to refund a third of the initial expenses incurred in their training, outfit and despatch, for each year which they failed to serve.[68] Methodist men too might be 'punished' for marriage, but only if they married during their first three years or so after ordination. Subsequent marriage was considered compatible with paid church work, by contrast with women's situation.

Where information exists as to what became of the single women in the three Johannesburg missions after they terminated their service there, it is striking how many - virtually half - went on to missionary or church-inspired welfare work elsewhere. Eight of the missionaries who married are known to have married priests, so again their training continued to be of value to the church. Most of those whose fate is unknown were Ekutuleni short-stayers or women who served only a short time in Johannesburg (Table 10).

e) Continuity and Women's Life Cycle

Over a third of the eighty Anglican women did not give more than a year's service, but most of these were intended short-stayers at the settlements. However, an equally large proportion did not give more than a five-year term's service (Table 11). Several among this group exemplified that early female emotional and/or physical collapse which so concerned mission administrators.

Really long service was recorded by the married women, especially in

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68 Dos 2579, Phillips to Morgan, 9 Nov. 1932; 2361, MacGregor to Maud, 26 May 1925.

the American Board, whose staff were missionaries for life in a fashion equalled only by some of the CR Fathers. Dora Phillips, on the Reef for thirty-nine years from 1918-1957, provided the ultimate example of continuity of female personnel. She appears to have been exceeded in energy only by her husband, so hers was not a sham lengthy appointment. Nor was Clara Bridgman's twenty-seven year stint. Among the Methodists, two ministers' wives, Ellen Cox and Mabel Allcock, had a thirteen-year involvement consecutively with the Manyano, and another wife led Sunday school and youth work for as long (Winifred Grant).

There was less continuity of personnel among the Anglicans. In the first decade and a half, until 1920, four different women (Deaconess Julia, Mrs. Jones, Theodora Williams and Amy Kent) led the church work among African women, while St. Agnes School also saw fairly frequent staff changes. There was greater stability in these spheres subsequently, with Deaconess Elsie Vigor running women's work 1920-33 and Agnes Beale from then until 1946, while Grace Broughton and May Brazier were at St. Agnes 1910-32 and 1920-34 respectively. In that inter-war period, it was particularly the children's work which had short-serving missionaries, though some of the outstanding township mission women worked for lengthy periods, notably Margaret Leeke, Dorothy Maud and Agatha Carew-Hunt - eighteen, seventeen and sixteen years respectively. It was precisely these settlements' dependence on temporary staff which so worried Dorothy Maud that she decided to ask the Wantage sisters to take over Ekutuleni to ensure the right kind of continuity.[69]

It does seem justified to relate the long service of some undeniably gifted women back to their lowly social origins. There was so clearly

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69 Dos 2361, Maud to Morgan, 17 May 1940.

little to go back to in England and, as noted earlier, so much more meaningful work and status in South Africa, that two of the women left England a second time in their sixties to return: Grace Broughton, the pawnbroker's daughter, who then spent a third decade in church service, and Florence Brown, from the millworker's family, who had been Wayfarer Secretary for over a decade after seventeen years as Methodist worker among children and teenage girls.

Did time-consuming child-rearing uniformly diminish the usefulness of the married women? The enthusiastic involvement of Mrs. Cox and Mrs. Grant in the Manyano movement and youth work respectively was obviously facilitated on the practical level by their childlessness, while these outlets for their zeal probably provided psychological comfort and compensation. Four young children, however, did not curb Mrs. Phillips's energetic efforts. She by 1924 was bringing up a family as well as travelling up and down the Reef to various meetings, and supervising the distribution of movies to mine compounds while her husband stood in temporarily at the Bantu Men's Social Centre. Once the handicap of no second car was overcome, she was busier than ever, writing, 'Ray and I wave to each other as we pass on the street'.[70]

Mrs. Esther Burnet's five daughters were well out of infancy by the time of her South African responsibilities, but her leadership of the Manyano did not equal the vigour of Dora Phillips's, no doubt partly because Esther was then in her fifties and sixties. Mrs. Carter, though her four daughters were grown up and married by the 1930's when her husband headed the Witwatersrand Methodist Mission, is remembered as 'a very sweet

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70 ABC: 15.4 v.39, Report of Johannesburg Social Work Department 1924-5, 1928; v.47a, Dora Phillips to Miss Emerson, 2 Feb. 1938.

motherly character, but believed in looking after her family'.[71] Her only recorded missionary contribution was of a practical and domestic, rather than clearly spiritual sort, the weekly cookery classes she ran at the Methodist Institute in those years. Katie Kidwell and Mabel Allcock each had only one daughter, and their active leadership in the Manyano dated to the time when both girls were teenagers or young adults. It was the American women who took active church initiatives when their children were small. Mrs. Bridgman started her Sunday school when her only son was four or five. However, within a few years, Clara expressed the view that the appointment of the spinster Alice Weir was essential as she herself was 'able to meet so few of the calls for service, as our boy and the home require more and more of my time and strength'. She gave up her Bible class to Miss Weir a few years later, when Brainerd was an adolescent, in order to take him regularly to church: 'I have never believed in neglecting one's own children even if I am a missionary'.[72]

Sacred devotion to her six children's spiritual needs was allegedly what kept another missionary wife, Caroline Goodenough, in the USA for two years after her husband returned to Johannesburg from furlough in 1901. While he wrote aggrieved letters to the mission Board, she persisted that her obligations as a mother were 'quite as pressing as those as a wife... Eternity is wrapped up in it', whereas her husband just wanted her companionship and 'ministration to his creature comforts'. She only rejoined him when she was satisfied that God was sending her.[73] The necessity for

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71 Letter from F. Brown, 12 Aug. 1978.

72 ABC: 15.5 v.3, Mrs. Bridgman to Miss Lamson, 30 Aug. 1917; v.5, Mrs. Bridgman to Miss Buckley, 2 May 1923.

73 ABC: 15.4 v.26, C. Goodenough to Rev. Judson Smith, 21 March, 13 Sept. 1902, 27 Sept. 1903.

missionaries to have regular marriages in the eyes of their converts was particularly stressed when Mrs. Goodenough's absences recurred. As Bridgman wrote to headquarters in 1912, 'We don't like the bachelor establishment he has been obliged to keep so much of the time in the last ten years. The question is always arising in the minds of white and black - "Why doesn't his wife live with him?" ! She actually resigned in sensational circumstances in 1912 but had virtually severed her attachment to Congregationalism and the Board two years previously, to work with Christians with the 'largest liberty in the Spirit', insisting that when a woman finished bringing up a large family, 'then if ever she has a right to be herself'.[74] The care of children could be a source of anxiety and diminished effectiveness for husbands as well as wives. James Dexter Taylor shared his wife's years of despair and nervous strain when their adopted son developed severe epilepsy in his late teens.[75]

Only one of the missionary wives in the sample was widowed at a relatively young age, in her early fifties. Clara Bridgman's activities multiplied in widowhood, if anything: 'I must live for my boy, and for the work my husband has laid down', she wrote.[76] With her son at college in America, she returned to Johannesburg to raise funds untiringly for the Bridgman Memorial Hospital. She stayed on another decade and a half supervising its fortunes, and founded the Talitha Home for delinquent girls. It is from this time that her most extensive correspondence to the Board dates, as well as annual reports of her activities. While her husband was alive, she was more 'hidden', her initiatives being recorded in his

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74 ABC: 15.4 v.30, Bridgman to Dr. Barton, 18 Jan. 1912; C. Goodenough to Strong, 19 June 1910.

75 ABC: 15.4 v.41, Taylor to Emerson, 6 June 1928, to Riggs, 2 Jan., 28 Aug. 1929.

76 ABCFM Biographical Collection Box 9 No. 48, (A Personal Letter from Mrs. Frederick B. Bridgman),

annual reports (although sometimes by her); similarly, Mrs. Phillips's work was noted by her husband as part of his, and for a twenty year period, only one letter by her personally, to the many from her husband, exists in the Board files. Down in Natal, Ruth Cowles's mother also became a lengthy correspondent once she was widowed.

Research on women's changing life cycle in the twentieth century strikingly demonstrates how a shorter period of child-bearing (due to birth control) combined with increased life expectancy have given women a much longer stretch of time after motherhood than was possible in the nineteenth century.[77] The activities of Johannesburg's married women missionaries illustrate this, and they had the added advantage over their counterparts of the previous century of the conveniences of modern urban life, which spared them both infant deaths and back-breaking clothes-making and food preparation. Though they too had domestic servants - Mrs. Bridgman, for example, wrote in 1927 of the Zulu woman who had been with them for the past sixteen years[78] - there was no longer that compulsion to make of the domestic service in a large mission household a comprehensive female education supervised full-time by the missionary wife. It was, however, an irony of the early years on the Reef that single Anglican women were not free of the old domestic duty of needlework. The SPG Women's Secretary was unusually vehement in her condemnation of the 'quite impossible' demands being made on them - 'perpetually' sewing cassocks, surplices, altar frontals and curtains, besides doing a 'tremendous amount' of making and mending for the CR Fathers personally.[79]

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77 E. Sullerot, Women, Society and Change (London, 1971), 52.

78 ABC: 15.4 v.30, Mrs. Bridgman to Miss Emerson, 26 Jan. 1927.

79 CWW, Williams to Saunders, 15 Dec. 1912; CWW Letters Sent, Foreign Secretary to Williams, 22 Jan. 1913.

The material analysed here is almost as much part of the social history of late nineteenth and early twentieth century British and American women, as of South African urban mission history. Missionary motivation fed off both the post-war unfulfilment of untrained, unmarried girls from comfortable families and the earlier equivocal position of elementary schoolmistresses. Assessments of candidates reveal the importance given to females being 'ladylike' and amenable, as well as an expectation of nervous delicacy particularly associated with women. As for Johannesburg mission activities, expensive enterprises drawing on local white support came from the better educated women or those whose confidence was bolstered by elevated social origins. Lowlier women provided long-term, sometimes more routine, sustaining of others' initiatives. Finally this chapter has shown how formal training and voluntary church work tended to prepare women for secular and religious teaching among children rather than among adult women. This key distinction is exemplified most strongly by the Anglicans, where three-quarters of the women were involved in such youth work once in Johannesburg (Table 12). Circumstances on the Reef itself helped to entrench this tendency and much of the rest of the thesis explores why and how this was so.

CHAPTER 3

AFRICAN WOMEN IN JOHANNESBURG

The Anglican and Methodist Churches started work in Johannesburg in the late 1880's in order to minister to white members; the American Board came to follow up Natal African male members working on the mines and in the Reef towns. For all denominations, one or other of these motivations predominated initially; none of them felt compelled to build churches on the Witwatersrand on account of female members, even though they were frequently in the majority among early rural converts. Clearly, this was because African women only came to Johannesburg in significant numbers a generation after their menfolk, and for some years were in the minority in urban churches. As the nature of this female population and the total context in which black women found themselves directly affected the kind of work women missionaries chose to do or could do among them, as well as rebounding on the style of female religious participation, the broad features of this group need to be delineated. This chapter will review some aspects of the size, origin, education, marital status and, even more important, employment of the black female population in Johannesburg between the Boer War and World War II.

a) Some General Features of the Black Female Population

While a big increase in the numbers of African women living in Johannesburg came during the First World War, female influx and natural increase spiralled in the 1920's and 1930's, as Table 13 shows. Between the 1911 and 1921 censuses, the number of black females in the city nearly trebled, from 4,357 to 12,160; in the period up to 1936, it increased five times on that to 60,992, while the male numbers grew by only just over half as much again. This meant that as the century advanced, the sex

ratio was becoming less abnormal all the time: for four black females to every hundred men in 1911, there were thirty-six in 1936, although of course it must be borne in mind that a growing proportion of those listed were children. There were 2,706 African females under fifteen years old in Johannesburg in 1921, and in 1936 there were 16,292.[1] This female increase was viewed with trepidation by the municipal authorities, for not only did the presence of women facilitate the development of a settled African population reproducing its own family life in the city (and producing new generations whose offspring in turn the city would be obliged to house), but also the women themselves tended to come to town to stay more often than the men. This raises the important issue of why women migrated, which women tended to come and from what areas.

Figures on the origins of Africans living in the Transvaal show up the tendency of Cape Africans, especially of the most mission-influenced groups, to migrate northwards once the gold mines had opened up. In the 1896 census of central Johannesburg, the largest 'tribal' groups among the 1,234 black women were 433 Mfengu, 249 Xhosa, 210 Basotho, 119 Zulu, 82 Shangaan and 45 Thembu.[2] Although there are no birthplace figures for the Johannesburg female population alone in subsequent censuses, we do know that in 1911 the most important places of origin of Transvaal urban females (of whom Johannesburg women numbered one-sixth) were the Transvaal, the Cape, Natal, the Orange Free State and Basutoland, in that order. The

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1 Union of South Africa, Third Census of the Population of the Union of South Africa, enumerated 3rd May, 1921, Report (Pretoria, 1924), Table CCCXXVII and Part B; Sixth Census...5th May, 1936, Vol. IX, Natives (Bantu) and other Non-European Races (Pretoria, 1942), xiii, and Table 10. This chapter derives from my unpublished paper, 'Laundry, Liquor and "Playing Ladish": African Women in Johannesburg 1903-39', CIAS South African Social History Workshop, June 1978.

2 J. J. Fourie, 'Die Koms van die Bantoe na die Rand en hulle posisie aldaar, 1886-1899' (MA, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, 1972), 140.

changes twenty-five years later, when Johannesburg women were more than a third of the total in towns, surely reflect the proletarianisation of rural Highveld Africans.[3] The Cape's proportional importance had declined markedly, while the Transvaal's large share had gone up and the OFS had noticeably increased its contribution (Table 14).

It is difficult at this stage to state in more than general, inevitably simplistic terms why African women came to Johannesburg. A female missionary told the Native Economic Commission in 1931 that the city's black women could be broadly divided into those who came unattached, perhaps ran away, from the rural areas, and a second group, the wives and daughters of families settled in town locations. Much the same distinction has been made recently by Eleanor Preston-Whyte, who asserts that either way, 'female migration stems basically from the structural position of women as the dependants of men'. The removal of male economic support, through desertion or the death or illness of husband or father, is crucial in making it necessary for those women not joining a father or husband to come to town to earn money.[4]

However, situating women's migration in their relationship of dependence on men does not take one far enough in explaining why large numbers, as opposed to individuals, flooded to the cities at particular points in time. Acute rural poverty, due to natural disasters and economic

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3 See T. Keegan, 'The Restructuring of Agrarian Class Relations in a Colonial Economy: the Orange River Colony 1902-10', Journal of Southern African Studies (JSAS), 5, 2 (1979); T. Matsetela, 'Aspects of Sharecropping and Proletarianization in the Northern Orange Free State, 1890-1920: The Life Story of Emelia Mahlodi Pooe', CIAS Conference on South Africa, Jan. 1980; Census of the Union of South Africa 1911, Part VII; 1936 Census, Vol. IX, Table 12 (ii).

4 SOAS Microfilm M4581, Native Economic Commission (NEC), Evidence of Dorothy Maud, 7622; E. Preston-Whyte, 'The Making of a Townswoman?

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depression, put additional strain on this dependent relationship and cut off alternative sources of aid to which women might turn. Thus the influx of African women to Johannesburg accelerated in 1906-8, because of drought, cattle diseases, a depression and the rebellion in Natal. The marked increase which the Johannesburg Superintendent of Locations noted in the population of Klipspruit Location in 1913, especially among the married, could have been linked to evictions under the 1913 Land Act or the continuing repercussions of the 1911 drought. The wartime floods and crop failures, followed by the savage 1919-20 drought, must have pushed more women out of the rural areas; the 1929-32 depression and the drought which followed it, certainly did. The 'tribal' explanations given for the arrival of women - that at first the Sotho and the Xhosa tended to bring their families to Johannesburg to a greater extent than Natal Africans, but that by 1930 the latter were increasingly doing so too - obviously need to be fleshed out with details of the differential impact of rural impoverishment and proletarianisation.[5]

Having insisted on the importance of the 'push' of economic hardship in reserves and on white-owned farms, one should not discount the 'pull' of Johannesburg as, to use the words of black East London women, a place 'to be free'.[6] It seems to have offered a desirable freedom from material dependence and male restraint to two particular groups, young women and

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The Process and Dilemma of Rural-Urban Migration amongst African Women in Southern Natal', ASSA, Sociology Southern Africa 1973 (Durban), 258, 281, 273.

5 Van Onselen, 'Witches', 15; Annual Report of the Superintendent of Locations in City of Johannesburg, Minute of the Mayor (1913-1914), 81; Evidence of G. Ballenden to NEC, SOAS M4581, 8309.

6 P. Mayer, Townsmen or Tribesmen? (2nd ed., Cape Town, 1971), 234.

widows. They had welcomed the alternative economic base of mission stations,[7] and now saw that in town they could earn and support themselves.

Rev. Tsewu of Johannesburg complained to the South African Native Affairs Commission that children, 'especially the girls, are getting out of hand and go according to their own will rather than according to their father's wish. They can run away from home and take a husband', and the state endorsed their disobedience. The problem was widespread; a Natal African explained that 'The girls run away in some cases, because their father refused to allow them to marry indigent persons'; girls running away from their kraals to Pretoria would board a train at the nearest station and either come singly or elope with a man. The 'bright lights' explanation for what they were running to was also given some weight by, for example, Walter Nhlapo writing in 1938: 'Enjoyments and fashions seem to be the chief cause of girls migrating to this city.'[8] Widows from Basutoland and the rural Transvaal excited particular comment in the late 1930's, when 'a great number' were said to be leaving 'to escape the discipline of either church or kraal'. They set up their own small income-generating enterprises on the Reef 'with uncanny business sense'.[9] The

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7 See Ch. 1, section c).

8 South African Native Affairs Commission, Vol. IV, Minutes of Evidence (Cape Town, 1904), 794; Natal Native Affairs Commission, 1906-7, Evidence, quoted in D. Welsh, 'The Growth of Towns', in M. Wilson and L. Thompson, The Oxford History of South Africa (London, 1971), 215; 'Special Report by Medical Officer on the conditions prevailing among the Natives, especially women and girls, at Pretoria', in Union of South Africa, Department of Native Affairs, Blue Book on Native Affairs, 1910 (Cape Town, 1911); Bantu World, 29 Jan. 1938.

9 'Marriage conditions affecting, and affected by urbanisation', in Minutes of Johannesburg Municipal Native Affairs Committee, October 1938; M. Janisch and D. W. T. Shropshire, Should Bantu Marriages be Registered? (Johannesburg, 1942), 6.

churches predictably had some difficulty in bringing these women who came to Johannesburg 'to be free', within the orbit of the Gospel.

As regards education, the fact that African women in Johannesburg showed a relatively high degree of literacy would appear to be the outcome of two circumstances: the superior educational facilities available in town as opposed to country, and the frequency with which literate (invariably nominally Christian) women migrated. In 1921, while only some 5 per cent of Transvaal rural women could read and write, the urban areas (of which Johannesburg provided roughly one quarter) had the highest proportion of literate black women for all the provinces: 31 per cent to the Cape's 28.5.[10] This literacy was obviously significant for church activity among women. It facilitated the reading of the Bible and hymn books, and it meant that printed rules, membership cards and conference programmes for women's associations could be comprehended by a substantial minority. Without a minimum reading ability shared among probably over a third of the members, it is difficult to see how African women could have conducted their own meetings based on preaching from Bible readings and much hymn-singing; extempore prayer, by contrast, drew in literate and illiterate alike.

Rooiyard mothers said of their children, 'They are married in the Johannesburg way'.[11] There was frequent comment from a variety of sources during this period as to the increase in irregular sexual unions and illegitimate births on the Reef. A multiplicity of factors appears to have been responsible: the imbalance in sex rations; higher lobolo prices;

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10 1911 Census, Part III, 242; 1921 Census, Part VIII, Table 17.

11 E. Hellmann, Rooiyard: A Sociological Survey of an Urban Native Slum Yard (Cape Town, 1948), 86.

the absence of appropriate kin to supervise marriage arrangements; the presence of married male migrants whose wives were still in the country; the residential demands of domestic service; the extreme poverty which made couples need each other for economic reasons too as neither could, singly, earn a living wage; and finally, though obviously not unaffected by these various circumstances, changing attitudes to sex and marriage.

Cohabitation could be fairly long-lasting. A location superintendent at the end of the 1930's said that, of examples of couples living together, sixteen years was the longest period he had encountered; some stayed together for six to eight years, but the average was about two. In his experience, the woman was more often the loser, finding herself deserted or ill-treated or insufficiently supported, with children to care for; the complainant in disputes in such unions was the woman more than two-thirds of the time. There is some irony in the Orlando Superintendent's assertion that in 50 per cent of township marriages, couples were just living together, for this was a situation created in large part by municipal housing policy. The unattached woman was not wanted in municipal locations with the result that, as a churchman commented, 'when a city area is "proclaimed" [for whites only] there is a scramble for "wives" and "husbands", and irregular unions are contracted.' A high proportion of women in domestic service were not married - 43.4 per cent in the mid-1930's - and as many female servants produced children nevertheless, this was obviously another sphere of the life of Johannesburg's African women that churches and women's organisations concerned to uphold marital fidelity and stability were going to find problematical.[12]

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12 Janisch and Shropshire, Bantu Marriages, 10-11, 4; The Watchman (Sept. 1936); 1936 Census, Vol. IX, Table 5.

The inter-relation of residential constraints and marriage patterns has been alluded to; a brief understanding of where African women lived over the forty years after the Boer War, provides a necessary context for those remarks. After the 1904 plague in Johannesburg, the 'Kaffir Location' in town, near Vrededorp, was razed to the ground and a new location established 12 miles south-west of the city near the sewerage farm at Klipspruit. It started off with a population of some one thousand Africans, but twenty years later, despite the mushrooming of the black population of Johannesburg as a whole, it held only 4,700, the location superintendent having complained constantly that Africans were 'using' its distance from town and the meagre train service 'as an objection to their living in a location under proper supervision'.[13]

For the first two decades of the century, then, apart from domestic servants and mine-workers, most Africans had relative residential freedom. Large numbers, uncomputed, lived outside direct municipal control in rented rooms grouped round courtyards in central areas of the town, from Vrededorp through to Doornfontein. A 1921 Commission's description of some yards in Lower Doornfontein provides the skeleton which Rooiyard fleshed out so vividly over a decade later, as the yards were in their death-throes: there was Brown's yard, which 'contains about 40 small rooms, all occupied by native families, which are packed to overflowing at night-time...Makapan's yard...about 45 small rooms...perhaps a shade cleaner. White Star Trolley yard...about 40 rooms occupied by natives and Cape families.' Sophiatown, Martindale and Newclare were developing a population of African freeholders and tenants at this time, as was Alexandra Township,

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13 Report of Estates Department, Mayor's Minute (1924); Mayor's Minute (1916), 78.

laid out in 1905 by an independent company which started selling stands to Africans in 1912. There were also a number of 'mine locations' where couples lived.[14]

Commissions, missionary bodies and certain Africans regularly called for the building of proper African townships; further municipal provision of housing came with Western Native Township (1918-21), the smaller Eastern Native Township (1924-7) and Orlando, the beginnings of Soweto, from 1932. The 1923 Urban Areas Act obliged local authorities to provide racially segregated housing. An attempt to proclaim the whole city 'white' was quashed by the courts as the council had not provided alternative accommodation for the Africans it proposed to evict from the congested central areas of Johannesburg. As a result, suburbs had to be proclaimed piecemeal and the black residents removed, the clearance process which aroused Rooiyard's suspicions against Ellen Hellmann. At first, those served with notice to move went to Alexandra, the Western Areas or undeclared suburbs, but by 1937, as the gaps closed, 90 per cent were taking up municipal housing, which they had resisted as long as they could.[15] Thus by the mid-1930's, the option of living in a yard was closing for African women; broadly, by that time they might be found in any of three types of residential situation - in a municipal location; in the remaining African suburbs like Sophiatown; or living on the premises of a white

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14 Province of Transvaal, Report of the Local Government Commission (1921) (Pretoria, 1922), par. 262; SOAS M4581, 8272. See also N. Kagan, 'African Settlements in the Johannesburg Area, 1903-1923' (MA, University of the Witwatersrand, 1978); Proctor, 'Sophiatown'; Koch, 'Slumyard Culture'; S. Moroney, 'Mine Married Quarters: The Differential Stabilisation of the Witwatersrand Unskilled Work Force 1900-1920', CIAS Conference on South Africa, Jan. 1980.

15 Report of the Manager, Native Affairs Department, Mayor's Minute (1934-5), 148; (1936-7), 244.

employer, as the growing number of female domestic servants invariably did. This leads naturally on to the question of the source of livelihood of African women in the city.

While census figures can give one the bare bones of how African women were employed, not only are some categories under-represented (there were surely more than five women petty-traders and hawkers in 1921 and over twenty in 1936), but illicit earners are, of course, not enumerated. No prostitutes or liquor-brewers appear in the statistics. Furthermore, some women combined and alternated among a range of informal money-raising activities - washing, vending, brewing, perhaps intermittent prostitution - and these women probably form a large proportion of those 19,210 African females over ten years of age listed in 1936 under 'household duties at home', for it was partly their marital status and motherhood which led them to that range of occupations. It is also possible that washerwomen and chars, for whom there is no separate category in the census, were returned as domestic servants; most of the 174 women listed as 'laundry workers' in 1936 were probably employed in commercial laundries, as ironers.

As all women other than European were grouped together in the first census after Union, it is only in 1921 that separate figures for Johannesburg African women's employment appear. The dominance of domestic service is overwhelming: 5,051 out of 12,160 females were thus employed. Even in 1936, when industrial workers, nurses and health attendants, teachers, and cooks each mustered around one hundred representatives, domestic servants swept the board with 22,391. Of the African females returned as 'gainfully occupied', 91.5 per cent fitted this category in Johannesburg. The position for African males provided a real contrast in 1936: while black men still outnumbered women in personal and domestic service (24,204 were

thus employed), they represented only some 16 per cent of all African males over ten years of age gainfully occupied in Johannesburg - mining came first with 41 and manufacturing next with 29 per cent.[16]

From the literature, it would seem that the two other large categories of money-raising activities in which African women engaged, even though they are not to be found in census reports, were liquor-brewing and washing. While some unattached women did either or both, the majority involved seem to have been married or living with a man. The explanation for this employment can be found on two levels. First of all, throughout the 1920's and 1930's few African men in Johannesburg received a wage sufficient to keep a family on, because of the range of factors which conspired to keep African urban wages low; wives worked for compelling economic reasons. At the end of the 1920's, for example, it was estimated that a family of five needed at least £6.1.2 a month to live; as the average African male wage was £3 to £5, the gap had to made up by the wives and by saving on food. A 1940 municipal survey found that, of nearly a thousand Johannesburg African families, 45 per cent of the women went out to work leaving children at home, which 'excluded those women who make a living by unadmitted means'. On average, the wives contributed 13.5 per cent to household income, children and sub-tenants 9.2 and husbands 77 per cent. It was the poverty of the urban African community which made the greatest impression on the Smit Committee in 1942.[17]

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16 1921 Census, Table CCCXXVII, Part R; 1936 Census, v. IX, Table 14 and xviii.

17 Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives, The Native in Industry (1929?), 2-3; City of Johannesburg, Non-European and Native Affairs Department, A Study of African Income and Expenditure in 987 Families in Johannesburg by Miriam Janisch (1941), 6,7; Union of South Africa, Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Social, Health and Economic Conditions of Urban Natives (Pretoria, 1942), par. 7.

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The nature of the wife's income-generating activity brings in the second level of explanation, the repercussions of biology and the absence of kin. A crucial restraint on women's employment was the care of the children they bore. While many were glad to do their own child-minding - 'The radiance diffused by a mother occupied with her child forms a startling contrast to the apathy and indifference which usually envelopes Rooiyard women'[18] - it did mean that earning at home was highly preferable to going out to work. Brewing and most washing were done at home. Of course, where the mother had no choice but to work in town, children might be locked up all day in the house for safety.[19]

b) Domestic Servants

Although nearly half the African women enumerated in 1896 were in domestic service, 553 of the 1,234 total,[20] the demand for African women servants appears to have been relatively small until the 1930's, as does the supply. While there were suggestions in the SANAC Report and at the time of the 1906-7 Black Peril scare that the substitution of African women for the ubiquitous 'houseboy' in domestic service was desirable, both to free African male labour for the mines and to keep white women safe from sexual hazard in the home,[21] it is clear from the complaint of the women of Klipspruit in 1910 that this had not been adopted on a

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It could be argued then that female supplementary earnings cheapened the industrial wage bill. The very opposite occurred on the Copperbelt, where it was the housewifely role of African women that benefited industrialists. See G. Chauncey, 'The Locus of Reproduction: Women's Labour in the Zambian Copperbelt, 1927-1953', JSAS, 7, 2 (April 1981) and, for the concepts he uses, E. Kaluzynska, 'Wiping the Floor with Theory - a survey of writings on housework', Feminist Review, 6 (1980).

18 Hellmann, Rooiyard, 61.

19 J. Sikakane, A Window on Soweto (London, 1977).

20 Fourie, 'Koms', 141.

21 SANAC, Vol. 1, Report of the Commission (Cape Town, 1905), 83; C.R. No. 21 (1908).

large scale. Mrs. Ellen Leeuw and 122 African women of the location petitioned the Johannesburg City Council to help them by opening up employment to them, as potential ways of earning a living were either forbidden to them (nursing, or running African eating houses) or monopolised by black men ('kitchen or general servants' work', and washing and ironing).[22]

As the number of women in Johannesburg stepped up after 1911 and the more hysterical pre-war Black Peril scare got under way, the calls for female servants were repeated by church and government bodies.[23] Two women arrested in 1916 for being without night-passes provide vignettes of one type recruited in those years: respectable, dependable married women - Mrs. Rebecca Atsiko, a Wesleyan minister's widow, had been working for Sir George Albu for five years and her friend, Mrs. Martha Mbiza, the daughter of a Transkeian headman, for Mr. Otto Lenz of Parktown for the same length of time. During the war, some women came in daily by train from Klipspruit to do domestic work for 2/- a day; others from the yards worked thus for £2 to £2.10 a month; many of the female servants living on their mistresses' premises left in those years because wages were cut by 5 or 10 shillings a month, due to the war.[24]

The domination of the domestic service labour market in Johannesburg

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22 Pretoria Archives, SAB NA v. 86, 228/1919/F164, Johannesburg - Disturbances in Klipspruit Location. For an explanation of how Zulu 'houseboys', through early access to the domestic service market and the development of skills, made it their own particular niche, see Van Onselen, 'Witches', 7-8.

23 Union of South Africa, Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Assaults on Women (Cape Town, 1913), 27; Report of the Proceedings of the Fourth General Missionary Conference of South Africa (Cape Town, 1912), 94.

24 Pretoria Archives, City of Johannesburg, v. 88, A823, Commission Re Native Strike Minutes of Evidence [Moffat Commission], 252-5; 150, 154.

by African males continued up to World War II, but the late 1920's and the 1930's did witness the beginnings of the shift towards female predominance. By 1945, the Municipal Native Affairs Department estimated that the city had 28,000 male servants to 32,000 female, who thereby outnumbered the 20,000 African women in locations and the 7,000 in African areas like Sophiatown. By contrast, NAD Manager, Graham Ballenden, gave an estimate in 1931 of 5,000 African women servants to 21,000 men. His explanations for the disparity between male and female numbers were:

> (1) Until comparatively recently, Natives did not permit their daughters or wives to go out to service; There is a very valid objection on the part of parents even today to their daughters having to sleep in the employer's back yard.
> (2) Men in the past have proved more reliable and women have proved most unreliable.
> (3) The registration of contract of service and pass laws affecting men only helped to create in the mind of the employer a greater sense of security.
> (4) Men are more amenable to discipline than women and
> (5) They give more service.[25]

By the end of the 1930's, with the development of secondary industry, these rationalisations for the popularity of male servants were having to yield to 'market forces'. Females were 'entering the City from far and near in large numbers to take the place of the male domestics'. The old disincentives to employing women were falling away: they offered the advantage of financial saving, as they were paid lower wages; while for controlling males, 'it is being realised that passes are not as effective as they might be'. The market in male domestics was drying up. Urbanised youth particularly were put off by the low wages and lack of residential

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25 See WUL, Xuma Papers, ABX 470712, Bantu Welfare Trust, 'Survey of Resident Bantu Domestic Servants in one Suburb of Johannesburg conducted in September and October 1946', 1; SOAS M4581, 7679.

freedom, preferring the fairer wages and fixed working hours in the commercial and distributive trades.[26]

Within the context of this changing market for women's domestic labour, most servants appear to have found work, as happened two centuries earlier in English towns, by asking their friends and recommending one another to places, although advertisements were also inserted in the newspapers by both employers and employees. The servants' informal communications network could so damage bad employers' reputations as to render them desperate for domestic help.[27] It was in acting as a kind of employment exchange or registry office, to put mistress and maid in touch with one another (particularly as a certain reluctance to employ women existed), that two mission-run women's hostels came to see part of their rationale.[28] In 1938 a Municipal Employment Bureau was established too; by mid-1939, its male clientele was consistently decreasing, and in 1939-40, employers asked for 1,465 black female servants as opposed to 920 males. But while it dealt 'principally with the less successful employers and employees';[29] this seems not to have been the case with the hostel agencies, especially in the later years, when they were supplying trained servants often to superior employers. Even when the combined efforts of the various

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26 City of Johannesburg, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 14 July and 21 Aug. 1939.

27 J. J. Hecht, The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England (London, 1956), 26-9; USPG, E, Agnes Beale, 3 Jan. 1937; Johannesburg Native Affairs Committee Minutes, 20 June 1939.

28 See Ch. 6.

29 Report of Native Affairs Department, Mayor's Minute (1939-40), 198; (1938-9), 242.

registry offices are considered, however, it is clear that they supplied only a few hundred servants a year; the thousands of women at work by the mid-1930's had made their own individual and informal arrangements.

One of the factors already referred to as hindering the supply of female servants - unsatisfactory backyard accommodation - was mentioned with near-monotonous regularity for some three decades in most discussions of the topic of African women domestics. Just as more sheer physical labour could be extracted from men, at a time when cooking, washing and cleaning were particularly heavy tasks, so employers clearly liked the greater freedom they felt they had to house male servants in extremely rough and primitive conditions. The 1905 Plague Report described how, of all the appallingly squalid and insanitary accommodation for Africans which it had encountered, that provided in private premises was virtually the worst:

> One boy was found sleeping in an old hen house, another in a hut made of two packing cases. Two boys were found sleeping in a cellar without either window or ventilation. Not infrequently the boys slept in the kitchen, and this in hotels and restaurants.

Nearly thirty years later, municipal minimum requirements revealed the persistence of totally inadequate provision. Each employer had to provide servants with some sort of bed, Ballenden explained: 'he is not allowed to let them sleep on the ground, or put in packing cases or sheets of galvanized iron, or anything else'.[30]

There were repeated expostulations from missionaries and others at the moral danger in which such rough and ready quarters placed the

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30 Rand Plague Committee, Report upon the Outbreak of Plague on the Witwatersrand March 18th to July 31st, 1904 (Johannesburg, 1904), 85; SOAS M4581, 8332-3.

girl on her own. In 1910 a Pretoria doctor described the setting thus:

> A Kafir girl, if employed by private people as nurse or general servant, is generally put to sleep in an outside room, in often close proximity to that occupied by the male domestic - the doors are, as a rule, innocent of locks, and of such windows as there may be, the panes are generally broken.[31]

The establishment of Christian hostels for African women domestic servants in Johannesburg was seen by missionaries as a way of providing the safe accommodation which employers patently did not care to offer their servants.

In the light of these philanthropic efforts to keep women 'pure', what is one to make of the references by whites to servant 'immorality'? The Johannesburg magistrate who expatiated to the Native Economic Commission was fairly typical: employers preferred not to have female servants 'as owing to moral laxity they are a source of anxiety'; he himself had had to dismiss five in one year, as they had all become pregnant, even though there was a lock and key on the room provided.[32] It is impossible to document how many African women in Johannesburg were 'ruined by their young white masters mostly', as was said of Durban women at the start of the century.[33] The attentions of boyfriends of the servants' own race, by contrast, were more evident.

Employers expected domestic servants to be available for duties at least twelve long hours a day; women were virtually bound therefore to live on the property, especially once the white suburbs began stretching miles to the north of African residential areas, which were themselves being

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31 'Special Report by Medical Officer...Pretoria', Blue Book on Native Affairs 1910, 350.

32 SOAS M4581, 'Statement by Henry Britten', 12, foll. 7374.

33 SANAC, III, 647, Evidence of R. C. Alexander, Superintendent of Durban Police.

moved further away from the city centre. They lived thus in enforced conditions of singleness; many in the 1930's were in fact young and unmarried. But 'service' was lonely and isolated; living quarters were bleak; relationships with other servants in the neighbourhood, male and female, would be an emotional necessity. The only chance of getting into a location to create some sort of family life was to link up with a man. As one African said of servants' liaisons, 'The man's aim is to get as much money and clothing out of the woman, while she must have a male partner to get a house to live in.'[34]

In The Marabi Dance, George, whom Martha loves and finally marries, fitted the type: 'He was in love with many girls...The kitchen girls all worked for him. They bought him suits and he collected money from them every month.' Bantu World published words of warning and cautionary fiction on this topic throughout the 1930's. One girl urged, 'Let us then save money for our ideal homes and help our parents instead of our false lovers' because 'some girls leave their homes only to act as places of retreat for loafers'.[35]

Premarital pregnancy resulted frequently from servants' love-affairs. Many left their offspring with relatives in the country. A missionary at Rustenburg, echoed by a chiefly adviser, described in 1930 how girls working in Pretoria and Johannesburg would come back home to give birth to a child, returning to have more children, which brought them home yet again. Parents gave up trying to find the men involved and take them to court, he said, because a man from Pietersburg or Mafeking or Swaziland was too elusive, unlike a local. A 1946 survey of Johannesburg domestic servants found that virtually all the children (one-third of whom were illegitimate) of the small

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34 R. Phillips, The Bantu in the City (Lovedale, 1938), 92.

35 M. Dikobe, The Marabi Dance (London, 1973), 103; Bantu World, 11 Dec. 1933; see also BW, 7 March 1936; 30 July, 27 Aug., 3 Sept. 1938.

sample of women, were with relatives; in view of the residential demands of service, this is not surprising.[36]

It is from the pages of African newspapers that one can gain some idea of the self-image and reputation of Johannesburg women domestic servants in the 1930's. In mid-1937 the editress of Bantu World's women's pages wrote a piece, 'On Being "Ladish"' (obviously a current slang term for their way of life, presumably a corruption of 'ladyish'), warning young domestic servants of the perils of not settling down:

> By "playing ladish" they mean getting into service, falling in love several times, moving about in town without asking anybody's permission and generally living the life that is uncontrolled. Coming and going as one jolly well pleases, so to say.[37]

Such girls would find that they could not get married. It is this free-wheeling, pleasure-loving young woman, going through jobs and relationships with equal facility, who was, in caricature, the bane of the northern suburbs in the 1930's, in a way remarkably reminiscent of the reputation of Victorian factory girls. White criticisms found an echo among some African women.

A lady teacher of Evaton self-righteously reprimanded 'Dorcas' of Killarney Mansions, who had written to Bantu World defending domestic servants:

> I do not believe that kitchen girls are better than lady teachers in any case, except for one, dressing and feeding young men whom they call their "husbands". Today we cannot get these young men to marry and be responsible for families all due to kitchen girls... Dorcas, my dear, you may be very close in contact with Europeans, wear their 1940 fashions, speak the English language very wonderfully, but with no self-respect you are NOTHING.[38]

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36 SOAS Microfilm of evidence to the NEC held at UCT, Rev. J. C. E. Penzhorn, 990-1; Mutle Mokhatle, 1103; Bantu Welfare Trust, Survey of Resident Bantu Domestic Servants, 10-12.

37 BW, 8 May 1937.

38 See over.

This lively correspondence bears witness to the growing stratification among African women, as well as the rapid development in those years of a substantial, more self-conscious and self-affirming group of female servants.

Much of what the black press published on the topic of female domestic servants was aimed at fostering and praising an amenable labour force; this would seem to signify the successful manipulative direction of the white financiers or the internalisation of colonial master-servant ideology by some, at least, of the servants, but probably both processes were at work. Bantu World regularly featured articles and letters urging women servants to make use of the opportunities for self-improvement which employment in a white home afforded. The case of Mabel Yobe, who contributed articles on baby care to the paper (this fact is in itself an interesting sidelight on the literacy and skills of servants), was cited. Her employers encouraged her to lead a full life and sometimes even honoured her by letting her join in family prayers, but

> Does this kindness spoil a sensible girl? No. Rather it makes her give to Such Europeans of her very best. Rather than spoil her and make her think she is now equal with the whites, a sensible girl becomes more humble and more careful in her work.

Johannesburg maids Rose Matele and Norah Moloa likewise urged self-improvement through newspaper reading and cheerful, appreciative service.[39]

Bantu World also, as a spin-off of this emphasis on worthiness, rebuked young girls for going off irresponsibly at night, leaving a boring job without notice; for engaging themselves to employers and then failing to turn up; or for mistreating the children to whom they were nursemaids.[40]

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38 'Domestic Servants Versus Lady Teachers', BW, 19 Feb. 1938, also 5 Feb., 5 March 1938.

39 BW, 23 and 30 Nov. 1935; also 21 March 1936, 9 Nov. 1935.

40 BW, 9 June 1934, 29 Feb. 1936, 2 May 1936.

Again at this time, in response supposedly to a request from a conscientious servant, housewifery articles like 'How To Do Your Washing Properly' and 'Learn How To Remove Stains From Garments' appeared, followed by tips on dusting and sweeping, with a reminder to the servant that she was 'responsible for the cleanliness of her mistress's home - a home that is loved by the mistress'.[41]

Specific individual examples of the desirable sort of maid were lauded. Mrs. Ephraim Sigonyela, who had spent 17 years in one house, was pictured 'in service attire' and the accompanying article observed that it took 'a very conscientious, clean and willing-to-work' woman to make a good servant. Again, Miss Serena Thokoa of Berea was featured as a gifted young servant who also did handwork in fancy patterns in her spare time and excelled at hairdressing for her friends.[42] It was almost as if the model maid was to work hard, have safe, decorative hobbies and no family or sexual ties. Such notions of docility, virginity and immaturity were implicit in the pervasive label of 'girl' for servants past their girlhood. In the light of such prevailing ideology, 'playing ladish' was an understandable act of rebellion and self-assertion. What clearly needs to be further explored, is the part the churches played in entrenching or countering such ideology.

Apart from their young men, some of whom may well have been spongers, servants were often working to help families back home, like Rossie Khabela of Yeoville, who saved to send home £3 a month to support her widowed mother and two sisters in Basutoland, or the girls at the Anglican hostel

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41 BW, 22 Feb. and 4 April 1936.

42 BW, 28 March 1936, 21 Jan. 1939.

maintaining babies back in the country.[43] On the available evidence, it is not possible to chart wage fluctuations in detail, but in broad outline, women servants' earnings appear to have remained static between 1918, when wages of £2 to £2.10 were mentioned (though admittedly for yard women, who were not getting board and lodging), and 1938. The records of the Helping Hand Club's registry office for 1937-9 show the prevalence of wages in this range or a little above: of 157 wages quoted, most were between £2 and £3, with a few as low as £1.15 or as high as £4.[44] Johannesburg domestic work was very well-paid in comparison with the washing and house-cleaning duties extracted from wives and daughters of rural labour tenants on white-owned farms throughout the Union. Earnings were also at least double the average in Highveld towns.[45] So although women's real wages were probably declining in Johannesburg over this period, the city could still attract women in financial need from some considerable distance away.

In 1938 one maid categorised the various kinds of domestic servants as 'housekeeper-cook, house girl, nurse-girl, waitresses, garden boy and wash girl'. It does appear as though a certain specialisation was occurring in the 1930's. Entries in the Helping Hand Club registry records at the end of the decade note of employers 'has a boy for heavy work' or 'big laundry sent out', confirming the impression that some African women were insisting on a more limited and clearly defined range of tasks; on the other hand, most requests were for 'general' servants, with a sprinkling of applications for cooks or nursemaids. 'Flatwork' appears as a category of

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43 BW, 12 Nov. 1932 (She must have been very well paid); USPG, E, A. Beale, 3 Jan. 1937.

44 See n.24 above and Helping Hand Club Registry Office book.

45 See Natal evidence, SOAS M4581, 1200, 1270, 1501; Report of Native Farm Labour Committee, pars. 176 and 191; Report of the Native Economic Commission 1930-32, 312-3.

domestic labour in the 1930's, as high-rises were increasingly built; it offered the advantage of residential freedom which a number of the hostel girls favoured.[46]

Were the various sub-divisions of 'service' differentially rewarded? The South African Institute of Race Relations surveyed the opportunities for African girls trained in domestic science at industrial training institutions and concluded that perhaps the girls' best hope for advancement lay in offering a speciality as cooks or nurse-maids. The value of training was debatable, as Inanda-trained Johannesburg servant Lucy Twala concluded in 1937. Her abortive Bantu Girls Domestic Service Association clearly aimed to protect the interests of the somewhat elite group of ex-boarding school servants to which she belonged, for she hoped to attend to the need for differentiation 'between the educated and the uneducated in the treatment and payment'.[47] Domestic servants, each atomised in her own work place and each negotiating with her own employer, have always been very difficult to organise.

c) Liquor-Brewers

That the brewing of kaffir beer was illegal, was a grievance with a long history among African women on the Rand; in 1897, twenty-one women asked the authorities to allow brewing, as they used beer as food, but the Johannesburg Superintendent of Natives was sure that the black women intended to sell it.[48] Several reasons why they should choose to make money this particular way suggest themselves. Beer brewing was a traditional skill

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46 BW, 7 May 1938; Helping Hand Club Registry Office Book, passim.

47 South African Outlook (Jan. 1932); BW, 28 Aug. 1937, 19 Aug. 1939.

48 'Verklaring van Emma Tunzi en 20 ander nie-blanke vrouens 27 Maart 1897', quoted in Fourie, 'Koms', 153.

females brought with them from the rural areas; it produced a beverage which their husbands and boyfriends would associate with relaxation and conviviality; it would be in demand with womanless mineworkers and could therefore bring in much-needed financial return; it required relatively little outlay in terms of cooking utensils but could be very profitable; it could be done at home, with all the domestic and child-minding advantages that that entailed. Prohibition simply made it more of a gamble. The prohibition of liquor for Africans lasted until 1938, when the Johannesburg Municipality established its own beer-halls, while still outlawing domestic brewing. Beer rations were given by certain employers of large numbers of Africans and individuals could obtain exemptions, but otherwise Johannesburg was meant to be a 'dry' city for Africans. In reality, the 1910 Transvaal Liquor Commission reported enormous sales to blacks, 'carried on with the regularity and permanence of a legitimate trade'.[49]

The illicit traffic in the late 1890's was in various types of European and doctored spirits; by 1911 the Reef police considered that the evil now came from the large quantities of kaffir beer, khali and skokiaan available. This was 'openly winked at by the Mine Authorities' to make the compounds popular. Further police inquiry fixed the blame for the supply mainly on the 'dissolute' women living in the 'married quarters' attached to mine compounds, a charge the subsequent Native Grievances Inquiry endorsed. Another reason for brewing was volunteered by Charlotte Maxeke, who claimed in 1918 that male domination of washing had tempted

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49 Quoted in The Illicit Liquor Problem on the Witwatersrand. Report of Unofficial Commission appointed by the South African Temperance Alliance and the South African Institute of Race Relations. May 18th, 1935, 8.

'many an honest girl and woman' into the selling of liquor 'because she had nothing else to make her living from'. This would relate to women living elsewhere, in yards and at Klipspruit.[50]

How valid is the link made between liquor-making and prostitution in the case of mine locations and more generally? It is difficult to make confident estimates as to the extent of prostitution. Ellen Hellmann regarded it as indissolubly linked with brewing; mildly intoxicated male customers were bound to make advances on the female seller or her friends. Ray Phillips could get no figures from the police during his enquiry in the 1930's, though an African constable told him there were at least 500 prostitutes in Pimville. The frequently good-hearted liquor queen is an inevitable figure in South African novels about urban Africans. In Mine Boy, Leah's man is in prison, and she seems to be faithful to him. Ma-Ndlovu of The Marabi Dance settles down monogamously with her Mozambique mine worker, boasting 'I have found a man.' Interestingly, it is a white author who makes his liquor-brewer character dissolute. Rev. Kumalo's sister Gertrude, in Cry, The Beloved Country, comes to town to look for her husband but ends up as a beer-brewer and seller, a prostitute who has been to prison. But Gertrude claims she was driven to such a life in order to get money to look after her child.[51] Brewing continued into the 1930's to offer, along with prostitution, the only chance of survival for such young women.

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50 SAB NA vol. 117, 7956/1912/F211, Memorandum in regard to illicit liquor amongst mine labourers on the Reef, Acting Chief Commissioner SAP, 20 Dec. 1911; Acting Commissioner Transvaal Police to Acting Secretary of Native Affairs, 10 Jan. 1912; Union of South Africa, Report of the Native Grievances Inquiry 1913-1914 (Cape Town, 1914), 18; Moffat Commission, 151.

51 Phillips, Bantu in the City, 180; P. Abrahams, Mine Boy (London, 1946); Dikobe, Marabi, 4-5; A. Paton, Cry, The Beloved Country (London, 1948), 27.

Explained one from Basutoland who had been abandoned in Johannesburg by the man with whom she had eloped, 'I must live, pay for my rent, bring up my child; I do not know how to work, therefore cannot seek domestic work in town, besides, what should I do with my small child if I had to work away from home?' African witnesses to the Native Economic Commission, however, virtually discounted prostitution.[52]

The 1920's saw illicit brewing stepped up in municipal, not simply mine locations, and police raids, usually on Sundays, to find and destroy liquor, resulted in quite violent set-tos with crowds. Two Africans were killed and three injured when the crowd attacked the police on a raid in Benoni location. A 'battle' in Prospect Township left several casualties and one African shot dead. A journalist recalled weekends in Ferreirastown and Prospect: 'Hordes of yelling angry native men and women welcome the raiders as they march up the lanes leading into the yards. The "liquor queens" stand sullenly at the doors of the rooms overlooking the yards, while drunken natives yell threats.' Because of the destruction of beer during raids, women needed to brew drinks that were quicker to ferment and less visible to prepare than traditional beer, which might take several days and had a very distinctive smell; more powerful liquor which could produce the desired effect in the short weekend drinking time available, was also a necessity. These 'vile brews' and 'noxious concoctions' (as official commissions invariably called them) might use calcium carbide,

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52 Mayor's Minute (1936-7), 248; SOAS M4581, Evidence of Xuma, 8346, and of Messrs Tema, Msimang, Masole and Dhlomo, 7446-7. Yet cf. Rev. Ngcayiya on Klipspruit prostitutes, Pretoria Archives, TAB City of Johannesburg, Parks and Estates Committee minutes, 20 June 1921.

methylated spirits, tobacco, molasses, sugar and blue stone.[53]

Non-South African 'undesirable' unattached women were regularly deported under the Urban Areas Act.[54] In most illicit liquor cases, however, much less drastic measures were taken - offenders paid fines. In many cases up to £5, they preferred seven days' imprisonment, and would also often choose fourteen days instead of the £10 penalty for possessing skokiaan. In some parts of the slums, there were organisations providing a sort of insurance to pay fines. The fines brought in thousands of pounds in the late 1930's, and a couple of hundred thousand gallons of 'Native Liquor' was destroyed each year. Women were also involved as intermediaries in the illicit supply of 'European' liquor to compounds or in the central areas of the city. An unofficial commission asserted that there were indeed prostitutes in the slums and dance-halls there.[55]

Were liquor-brewers mostly single women out to make big money (the line the municipality took) or, on the contrary, almost all respectable wives driven to supplement their husbands' paltry incomes (as most Africans asserted)? The weight of evidence favours the latter claim, for the late 1920's and the 1930's at any rate. On the one hand, the municipal social worker, examining several cases of unattached women in Western Native Township in early 1938, noted how many were deserted wives from Basutoland,

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53 Umteteli wa Bantu, 8 Sept. 1923, 16 May 1925; A. N. Wilson, 'The Underworld of Johannesburg', in A. Macmillan (ed.), The Golden City Johannesburg (London, 1937?), 158; Umteteli, 17 March 1923; Report of the Native Economic Commission, 110.

54 Umteteli, 25 Jan. and 2 March 1929; Report of the Native Farm Labour Committee, par. 459.

55 SOAS M4581, Evidence of H. Britten, a magistrate, to the NEC, 7361-2; Phillips, Bantu in the City, 178; The Illicit Liquor Problem.... Unofficial Commission, 9, 10, 15, 18.

sub-tenants brewing skokiaan for 'easy money': 'The location is not a home to them but only a convenient place of business'. One Skokiaan queen had put aside a comfortable sum of money over the years; she now wanted to acquire a stand, build her own house, and live in respectable retirement.

Examples could be cited of really wealthy liquor queens, like the woman arrested in Klipspruit who said she had some £700 put away in her house, and on release from jail complained her husband had spent the additional £200 she had buried in her yard. Even the Sophiatown Ratepayers Association, while calling liquor queens 'martyrs of the race' and 'victims of a bad economic system', asserted that they were among the few Africans who could afford higher education for their children. The Manager of the Municipal NAD summed up his verdict:

> The big liquor makers and sellers are women who are not affiliated to any particular man here - those who are generally known as your skokiaan queens. These people come here purely for the purpose of making liquor, not because of the lack of wage, anyway, but because of the ease with which they can make a big income...But with the majority of decent families, the wife goes out to do charring, or washing, or something like that, no, they do not resort to liquor.

At the end of the decade, he was no less vigorously forthright and told the 1938 Conference on Native Juvenile Delinquency, 'The mawkish attitude that "the natives are so poverty stricken that the poor things must turn to liquor selling" should be dropped'.[56]

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56 Johannesburg Native Affairs Committee Minutes, 21 Feb. 1938; SOAS M4581, Evidence of Detective Hoffman, 7656-7, 'Statement by the Sophiatown and Martindale Non-European Ratepayers Association', foll. 7725, and Ballenden, 8334; WUL, AD843, B56(d), Conference on Native Juvenile Delinquency, G. Ballenden, 'The Situation as Viewed by Municipal Authorities'.

As against this viewpoint, Africans repeatedly told the Native Economic Commission of the economic compulsion upon women to become beer-brewers; they were backed up by more disinterested witnesses like Detective Hoffman:

> Do you really think that the payment of low wages has anything to do with the present illicit traffic? -- I do. I think that women brew liquor simply for the sake of making both ends meet. That is my experience.
> So that a reasonable improvement in the level of wages should do something towards reducing the trouble? -- Yes, I certainly think so.

Ellen Hellmann's research in a Doornfontein yard in 1933-4 underlines this judgment emphatically. She described convincingly the poverty, the constant economic struggle of the hundred African families she studied there, and the absolutely central importance of the earnings of the women, which were overwhelmingly derived from the sale of beer they had brewed. Rooiyard provides classic accounts of the lanes and alleyways of the yard, which were 'literally subterranean cellars', where the tins and drums of beer were sunk into the ground for fermentation and concealment. The women there sold mainly to male and female domestic servants; the proximity of the yards and rooms of Ferreirastown, Doornfontein and Prospect to mines and suburbs gave them superior attractions compared to the municipal locations, where police and local surveillance were greater and the potential market was smaller. The women brewed usually on Tuesday and Friday; the size of their clientele would depend on the quality of liquor which they offered, their credit facilities and the number of their (more often their husband's) friends and relatives. They also organised dances and concerts to attract customers and boost sales, showing unaccustomed mutual helpfulness at these functions. Beer-brewing fulfilled different economic functions according to a woman's marital status:

> The married woman supplements her husband's income by selling beer. She supports the entire family when he is unemployed. The single woman, widow or deserted wife can by means of the beer-trade maintain her independence and freedom of choice in regard to domicile.[57]

Clearly the centrality of beer to economic and social life in Johannesburg was a potential problem of some magnitude for the churches, especially those like the Methodists with a strong temperance tradition. The liquor trade was not a matter of a few 'loose' women whom missionaries might resign themselves to hardly influencing; it pervaded the way of life of the bulk of the city's poor black families. Not only did beer necessitate the disciplining of some women church members, but it also prevented brewers, should they so desire, from attending Sunday services, as the busiest selling-time was over weekends. Rooiyard women explained to Hellmann, 'Here beer is our church.' The 1935 Unofficial Commission, on which Anglicans, Methodists and American Board had representatives, concluded that the prohibition of kaffir beer had been a 'grave mistake', which indicates the impact of this question on the churches. The commission called for the legalisation of beer and the raising of African wages; neither request was fully implemented.[58]

d) Washerwomen

Although the only African woman to die in the 1904 plague in Johannesburg was a fifty year old washerwoman from New Goch Location,[59] black women in fact found themselves generally edged out of laundry work

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57 SOAS M4581, 7656; Hellmann, Rooiyard, 37, 39, 45-6, 53.

58 Hellmann, Rooiyard, 101; Unofficial Commission, 41.

59 Rand Plague Committee, Report, 9.

as an occupational niche until the beginning of the 1920's. It was licensed Zulu 'washboys' who washed the clothes of white Johannesburg instead, at first at various irregular washing sites within the municipal area, but after 1907 out at the Klipspruit washing site. A few hundred cement washing bins were built, there were corrugated slabs, together with 'beautiful clean piped water', a wringing room and an ironing room. By 1920, washing fees no longer feature in the reports. The appetite of secondary industry for male labour, together with the growth of commercial laundries, provided the structural underpinning of this change; washing was also being viewed by then as 'the sphere of native females'. The shift of outlook was one which African women could only approve. The sign of the times appeared too in a 1917 reference by the Anglican woman missionary at the hostel to residents trying 'to cheat us too, and take in washing, at the expense of our coal and water'. In Western Native Township, a clothes washing place was built in 1920 and women earning by laundry work were expected to use it.[60]

As the 1920's and 1930's progressed, the number of African women earning money from washing grew most substantially, although it is impossible to be more than impressionistic about their extent. Certain facts are clear about this group. On the whole, they were older married women; there were very few juvenile washers, as whites were inclined not to trust them. They chose washing in preference to full-time domestic service as it meant they could live with their families and combine child-minding with wage-earning. The initially puzzling feature of the time-consuming travel to and from the white suburbs with wash-bundles, is

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60 Report of the Superintendent of Locations, Mayor's Minute (1907), 97, (1918), 72, and (1919), 71; USPG, E, A. M. Kent, 1917; Johannesburg Parks and Estates Committee Minutes, 17 April and 8 May 1923.

explicable on these grounds: the presence of young children at home necessitated bringing the work back. Women could always fall back on washing to augment income if other jobs would mean being too much away from home. One nurse did so during the Second World War, even though it was a blow to her pride, being 'generally taken as a sign that one did not have education'. Another left her job in a lampshade factory a decade later for washing, as she had discovered her son was playing truant from school.[61]

Washing was not lucrative even by comparison with other jobs open to African women at this time. It was more arduous and poorly rewarded than brewing. It could hardly have provided a living on its own, and invariably supplemented a male income or was accompanied by brewing, or both. Around 1930, bundles done at home cost 7/6 per person per month, up to 10/- or, on rare occasions, 12/6. Each person's bundle would include sheets, towels, table linen and personal laundry. The washerwoman had to pay for soap, blue, water, coal for heating and train fares, so that in the extreme cases of exploitation noted, where a woman got 12/- for three people's monthly wash or £1.5 for six persons, she would make less than a shilling a week profit. Even the seasoned members of the Native Economic Commission found these figures very striking. Dr. Roberts asked if, in view of the very small net profit, the women must do it or starve, and the Anglican priest who had furnished this information agreed; it was either that or doing something illicit, like brewing.[62]

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61 E. Hellmann, Problems of Urban Bantu Youth (Johannesburg, 1940), 123; K. Vundla, P.O. The Story of Philip Vundla of South Africa (Johannesburg, 1973), 24; Interview, Mrs. Mavimbela, 3 March 1978.

62 SOAS M4581, Statement by Church of the Province of South Africa, Diocese of Johannesburg; Evidence of Father Francis Hill, 7566-7, 7596-7.

The dilemma was eloquently voiced by a Christian African woman:

> It's almost impossible for us to live decently in Johannesburg...The temptation to sell this stuff /beer/ is almost too strong. All the women around here are making a lot of money; buying pianos and gramophones and silk dresses. Because I am a Christian and try to go straight, I have to stand here day after day and kill myself washing.[63]

In 1940, the meagre rewards of washing persisted: often at least one quarter of laundry earnings were paid out for transport, soap and fuel, the latter being a heavy expense for heating water and irons, nor was it unusual to pay out in order to finish the work by candlelight. By 1944, Alexandra women found that the maximum number of 'pieces' they could do was five, at 10/- per person, giving them £2.10 a month, but with fuel and materials and transport, at 16/7d. per month, their net income was £1.13.5d. Despite the very low rates, washing made an essential contribution to the payment of rent in Western Native Township, for example, as both the women and the Council recognised.[64]

Another key feature in an attempted profile of the pre-World War II washerwoman was that she usually lived in an African location or township, although some Rooiyard women, for instance, did a bit of washing (they were more favourably placed on the whole for the liquor trade). She was part of the settled, proletarianised family population in WNT, Sophiatown, Pimville, Alexandra or Orlando. Dorothy Maud of the Anglican Mission in Sophiatown

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63 R. E. Phillips, The Bantu Are Coming (Lovedale, 1930), 136.

64 Janisch, A Study of African Income, 15; Union of South Africa, Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Operation of Bus Services for Non-Europeans on the Witwatersrand and in the districts of Pretoria and Vereeniging, 1944 (Pretoria, 1944), par. 161; Johannesburg Native Affairs Committee Minutes, 5 June 1929; Umteteli, 4 Aug. 1934.

said that 'the huge majority' of women there took in washing. 'I think nearly every woman does.' When she first started work there in 1927, she 'hardly ever' visited anyone who wasn't 'either washing or ironing'. She described vividly to the Native Economic Commission how this washing shaped the week in the suburb:

> Is there not some phrase about life being regulated by washing day? -- Yes, and we arrange all our work according to the washing days. We have to be guided by that...Well, on Monday you cannot do anything, because the women are all out to fetch the washing. The big children also go out to collect the bundles. On Tuesday they wash, on Wednesday they iron, and on Thursday everything blossoms out. Friday is a good day. On Saturdays they take the bundles back, and you have to be guided by those days.[65]

Being a washerwoman entailed extensive travel, often on foot. For instance, a woman from the Western Areas could take a 'native' tram or bus the six miles into town, but would probably have to walk on from there to Rosebank, Jeppe, Kensington or Bezuidenhout Valley (the 1934 Transport Commission commented that regarding transport, 'it knew of no city in the world where so large a part of the working population was so badly served'), to collect the bundles and carry them back to the New Market terminus. They were allowed to take the washing on public transport, but the Railways caused a rumpus when the line to Orlando came into use, by proposing in 1934 to charge 6d. a bundle. This would cut further into meagre profits. After representations by the Joint Council and Ballenden, and a petition signed by the headman and fifty women from Klipspruit, the Railways conceded that bundles of washing up to 50 lbs. in weight could go free.[66]

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65 SOAS M4581, 7612; Ashley, Peace-Making, 23.

66 SOAS M4581, 7612; J. P. R. Maud, City Government: The Johannesburg Experiment (Oxford, 1938), 123; Umteteli, 15 Sept., 6 Oct. 1934.

Other married women living in townships turned to charring for its similar advantages of part-time work which did not necessitate living away from one's family. Quite a number from Western Native Township would go to town between one and three days a week, at the start of the 1930's, or perhaps do casual work for some four different employers in flats. Eastern Native Township was popular because it was near the large white residential areas of Jeppe and Kensington, so the wives could walk to work, saving on fares, and get back fairly early from charring. Other informal means of earning a living involved hawking mealies and sugar cane in Malay Location, perching on empty paraffin tins and improvised stools at the entrance of Western Native Township trying to sell boiled eggs, pancakes, doughnuts, fruit and green vegetables, or perhaps running one of some 40 Cafes-de-Move-On licensed by the Municipality by the late 1930's, peddling coffee, tea, cakes, ice-cream, eggs, fruit and vegetables to groups of men just arrived in town for work from the locations.[67] A few women came specifically to town to make use of these hawking openings; the municipal records have a story of two old women who came from Basutoland with their tobacco crop with high hopes, only to end up in a factory because they gave too much credit to plausible 'mineboys'. A small number of women were self-employed as dressmakers or worked as tailors' assistants, cashiers, waitresses and cooks in eating houses, and assistants in General Dealers Shops by the end of the 1930's.[68]

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67 SOAS M4581, Evidence of Ballenden to the NEC, 7703, 7732; Parks and Estates Committee Minutes, 4 July 1921; Umteteli, 11 Jan. 1936; Phillips, Bantu in the City, 123. For coffee carts, see Vundla, P.Q., 24, 60.

68 Native Affairs Department Report, Mayor's Minute (1936-7), 249; City of Johannesburg, Non-European and Native Affairs Department, Survey of the African in Industry within the Municipal Area of Johannesburg /1939/, vi.

In summary, apart from the handful of teachers, black women in Johannesburg between 1903 and 1939 were employed in liquor brewing and a small amount of washing and domestic service up to 1920, while the great expansion of the housework and laundry section came after 1920, together with the drawing in of increasing numbers of impoverished family women to the brewing sphere. A broad characterisation of these three main employment spheres has been attempted, for some of the young, self-confident female servants of the 1930's were brought within the churches' orbit, but middle-aged washerwomen (even if covert beer-brewers) proved a more natural constituency.

PART II

BLACK WOMEN - PRAYER UNIONS

Probably the most visible and well-known feature of black women's Christianity in contemporary South Africa is their participation in uniformed prayer associations which meet every Thursday. No scholarly exploration of the origin and development of these movements exists, but this part of the thesis aims to help provide such historical perspective. Prayer unions were founded in the three most noteworthy Protestant churches on the Witwatersrand in the early twentieth century. By 1940 they had some five thousand members on the Reef and double that in the Transvaal as a whole. The Anglican Women's Help Society was started by white women missionaries whereas the Methodist Manyano and the American Board Mission Isililo were the creation of African women,[1] but what is most striking is the way all three developed a common spiritual style and content, a common self-assertion and zeal, which white missionaries could not substantially remould.

Sundkler's initial interest in Zulu independent churches derived from the assumption that in them one could 'see what the African Christian, when left to himself, regarded as important and relevant in Christian faith and and in the Christian church'.[2] It could be argued that manyanos had

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1 Hewson, Introduction, 100, is therefore wrong to attribute the Transvaal Manyano to Mrs. Burnet, as is Mia Brandel in assuming of manyanos, 'No doubt they are the oldest European-inspired organisations'. See 'The Needs of African Women' (Ts, 1955, in South African Institute of Race Relations Library, Johannesburg), 175. Pauw, Christianity, 66, sees manyanos as representing an 'indigenous development' to a 'certain extent'.

2 Sundkler, Prophets, 17.

sufficient autonomy, even within the mission churches, for them to act similarly as a reliable guide to what African women of the second or third generation of converts wanted from and found in Christianity. As all three associations achieved an even greater independence from white supervision from the late 1930's or in the 1940's, it is from the period under consideration that the most intimate observations of these movements by women missionaries survive. Used together with personal testimony from African women,[3] these observations provide a fascinating picture of the first three decades on the Reef of the type of organisation which, more than any other, mobilised support from African women.

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3 Both oral and written. Apart from a few handwritten letters and reports from Primitive Methodist women, the main African documentary sources were two fiftieth anniversary pamphlets written by prayer union officials incorporating recollections of elderly members. The Methodist Church of South Africa. Transvaal and Swaziland District. African Women's Prayer and Service Union. Manyano-Kopano Jubilee Celebrations (1959) is largely devoted to 'The Story of the Manyano' by Mrs. A. E. N. Bolani (President 1944-6) and Mrs. J. Duiker (General Secretary 1956-9). Umlandu Wesililo Samabandla 1912-1962 /'A History of the Isililo of the Churches'/ was compiled by Mrs. T. F. Mbili, daughter of Mrs. Kaula, one of the founders of the American Board association. I am very grateful to Mrs. I. Mkwayi for lending me this pamphlet and to Mr. M. B. Yengwa for translating it.

CHAPTER 4

THEIR SEPARATE HISTORIES

a) Methodist Manyano

Just as the Methodists have predominated numerically in mission church recruitment of Africans, so their prayer unions are acknowledged as the dominant model for African Christian women in South Africa. As, in addition, the Methodist movement in the Transvaal predates the Anglican by a few months, it comes first both chronologically and logically. Its beginnings illustrate neatly how Transvaal African Christianity drew strength from well-established strongholds of Nguni converts further south. After attending a women's convention at Edendale in Natal in 1907, Mrs. Stephen Gqosho, wife of the Cape-born Wesleyan minister at Potchefstroom, 'got the inspiration to start a similar movement among the Transvaal African women'. She started with a small group of six meeting on Friday evenings to pray 'for their families and for the common unity and for their sins'. They prayed also, in view of the current high death rate on the mines, 'that God should hold the mine pillars so as not to fall on their husbands and sons and thus kill them prematurely'; prayers for the uprooting of witchcraft and superstition were included too. Mrs. Gqosho clearly had more than the simple prestige and respect increasingly being ascribed to black ministers' wives. She showed initiative and spiritual power in spreading her movement throughout the district by 'holding revivals' in different places, where 'those who felt the need for co-operative prayer came forward, giving their names as co-workers'.[1]

Titular white supervision was introduced in 1910 as a result of two

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1 Manyano-Kopano.

factors. First, the prayer women came to the attention of the Potchefstroom white Wesleyan superintendent in 1908, when he opened proceedings at their first convention: 'The women had arranged the whole thing themselves, bringing their own food or money, and many of them slept on the floor of the church'. He got Rev. Briscoe, as District Chairman Amos Burnet could not attend, to give the opening address the following year, again at Potchefstroom. Secondly, Mrs. Gqosho's leadership for some reason provoked dissatisfaction, though there is no indication that a white president was wanted. Three African ministers' wives complained to the Secretary of the Synod, who 'reprimanded' Mrs. Gqosho; her subsequent demotion contributed to her husband's resignation in 1914.[2] Thus it came about that in January 1910 the Transvaal District Synod, on 'petition from a number of Christian women, and after consideration in the Native Committee...approved of a Union of Christian Native women for devotion and Christian work', instructed the Native Affairs Committee to frame a suitable constitution in line with Wesleyan Methodist polity, and 'requested Mrs. Amos Burnet to become the first President of the Native Women's Association'.[3]

As the imposition of overall white female control under the aegis of the male ministry meant that African women were no longer entirely free to chart the direction their association would take, the influence actually exerted by a succession of white presidents will be examined first, before looking at African leadership and membership of the

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2 Transvaal Methodist (TM) (Oct. 1938), 3-4; Manyano-Kopano, which quotes sympathetically with regard to Mrs. Gqosho an African proverb meaning 'the digger of a spring of water is not the drinker thereof'. When Rev. Gqosho was received into the Primitive Methodist ministry in 1915 he gave as his chief reason for leaving the Wesleyans, 'that a number of churches under my charge were taken away from me, and my wife was deposed from The Women's Prayer Union which she had instituted and organised'. MMS 1180, File of Rev. S. Ghosho (sic).

3 MMS 346, Synod Minutes (S/M) Transvaal, 1910, 8. Interestingly, a /...cont. over

movement, and its distinctive conventions.

Mrs. Burnet headed the movement until her return to England in 1919; it was known as the Native (later African) Women's Prayer Union, the term Manyano becoming current only at the start of the 1920's. As the weekly prayer meetings in the various circuits were left to run themselves, Mrs. Burnet's chief duty was to preside over the annual conventions, accompanied by the youthful Ellen Cox. While to the African members the basic objects of the Prayer Union were 'to cultivate the habits of praying and to consolidate Christianity among the folks', Mrs. Burnet's focus was rather on the domestic virtues of the devout wife and mother. She urged delegates at the 1915 convention to 'show the power of their religion in the way they care for their husbands - many of whom are not Christian - and in an increased effort to train their children for the Lord'. Her concern for simple hygiene and propriety was reflected in the constitution which was eventually passed, in such elementary rules, later dropped, as:

a) Sweep and clean the house every day.
b) Keep your things and your family clean and good.
c) If you have children teach them the Christian faith. Do not let them run naked.

Mrs. Burnet's daughter, setting out the Union's aims more fully and formally in 1913, gave them a flavour of Victorian moral self-improvement:

1. To secure the due recognition of the place of a Christian home in a people's life.
2. The inculcation of the moral duties of industry, honesty, truthfulness, cleanliness and kindness by example and precept in the home.
3. The training of the younger women and girls to take their places as Christians in the national life.
4. The encouragement of individual Missionary effort among women not yet evangelised.
5. The consideration of any questions that affect the

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committee was appointed the very same year to frame regulations for Methodist Native Women's Associations in the rest of South Africa. See Minutes of the twenty-eighth Annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa (Cape Town, 1910), 142.

> life of the native home and the morale of the people.[4]

As will become clearer from the discussion in Chapter 5, it was probably the fourth aim which, along with prayer itself, was the most meaningful to the African members.

Mrs. Cox took over as the enthusiastic president of the Manyano from 1919-22, since the wife of the acting Chairman of the District 'was not suitable and was not asked to take it'. Apart from working with the women in Mafeking where her husband was then based, Mrs. Cox basically had to make the most of the opportunities which the conventions offered for 'spiritual fervour and wise instruction'. She found it difficult to describe the 1921 gathering, where she was helped by Mrs. E. W. Grant, 'in sufficiently picturesque language' to enable those at home 'to see the significance of it, or to feel the throb of its spiritual vitality'. Rev. Cox was similarly impressed by the Manyano, reporting it 'very vigorous... a great spiritual force' and 'going VERY STRONG', although his candid, often sardonic, ministerial colleague Edwin Bottrill thought it 'more of a mob than an organisation'.[5] It was at this stage, fifteen years after the Prayer Union began, that Burnet, now back at the Mission headquarters, revived his demand, first voiced in 1917, for the appointment of a capable European woman Organising Secretary as a 'matter of very great urgency' so that the movement's 'extraordinary possibilities' could be used in the best way. But no such appointment materialised, partly because the post was at one stage intended to be

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4 Manyano-Kopano; Allcock Papers, 'African Women's Prayer Union (Manyano). Rules'; Foreign Field (FF) (Feb. 1916), 133, (April 1913), 251. These two mission periodical articles are the best accounts of the Manyano in its first decade, which is very sparsely documented.

5 Allcock Papers, Mabel Allcock to her family, 1 Oct. 1922; MMS 841, F. Cox to Burnet, 23 Feb. 1921; MMS 842, Cox to Burnet, 1 March 1922, Bottrill to Burnet, 12 Oct. 1921.

linked with the position of matron of an African Girls' Hostel, a project which was a European rather than an African priority and foundered in the early 1920's.[6]

In the event, Mrs. Mabel Allcock provided a great deal of organisational impetus and was probably a more acceptable figure than a single woman lacking such ascribed authority could have been. Wife of the new District Chairman, she arrived in 1922 and eased her way into Manyano leadership by the time of the 1923 convention, for Mrs. Cox accepted that it was 'proper' for Mrs. Allcock to be President. In Burnet's estimation 'a very highly gifted lady, an excellent speaker and a great religious force', Mrs. Allcock was, the Manyano officials record, 'like "A new broom sweeps clean"...great strides of improving the organisation took place'.[7] The three key issues on which she insisted on conformity, meeting resistance in each case, related to orderliness rather than the domestic or devotional content of the Manyano. In a sense, Mrs. Allcock aimed to make the Prayer Union less of the 'mob' Bottrill had dubbed it, by focusing on the irregularities of the red-blouse uniform, answerability to the local church, and the selection of true delegates to conventions.

The uniform controversy is discussed in Chapter 5, section c), and appears to have been the most heated. Secondly, Mrs. Allcock tended to remind Manyano leaders in the Executive Meeting that each prayer group was under the authority of the local church and should keep it informed. This resulted in a constant 'tone of discontent' for which the 'chief cause was the desire to be independent to carry on by themselves, resenting being under the Leaders Meeting'. No doubt what particularly rankled was that, according to the rules, the Leaders' Meeting, the

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6 MMS 841, A Summarized Report of Discussions between The European Ministers of the Transvaal and Swaziland District and The late Rev. Dr. Haigh (1917); MMS 1052, Women's Work Correspondence Transvaal, Mabel Allcock to Miss Bradford, 4 Sept. 1922.

7 MMS 842, Burnet to Bottrill, 3 Nov. 1921; Manyano-Kopano.

male-dominated congregational council, had to deal with all charges affecting character and church discipline, and any member it suspended had to return her card and badge. The Manyano was thus robbed of the autonomous female group discipline it coveted. Finally, after unwieldy convention attendances of well over five hundred delegates, Synod in 1924 revived the rule that there was to be only one delegate for every twenty-five branch members. When Mrs. Allcock introduced, at Mafeking in 1928, badges with the delegate's name and address, to be worn at all sessions of the convention to ensure that only legitimate representatives were present, the move aroused great opposition. 'The women were up in arms. They were not going to submit to this'.[8] The very large numbers gave conventions spiritual impact and social conviviality; perhaps the fact that there were always large public meetings as part of the programme and a communion service to which any Manyano member could come, helped reconcile the women to numerical limitation. In the 1930's, it even became necessary to restrict branches to one delegate per fifty members.

In addition to presiding at conventions, Mrs. Allcock was able, frequently by accompanying her husband on his visits throughout the Transvaal, to attend individual branch meetings, twenty in all during 1923, for example, and sixteen in 1925. It was always her policy to invite the local white Methodist Women's Auxiliary to visit the Manyano convention. The African women, with a bow to Aggrey, paid tactful tribute to the value of this inter-racial contact: 'You have thus taught us and them how essential it is for us and them, if we would produce good

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8 Manyano-Kopano; '(Manyano) Rules', no. 8; MMS 347, S/M 1924, 9. Either of these two issues could explain the enigmatic statement in the Synod records for 1930 to the effect that 'A discussion took place through a misunderstanding on the part of some of the branches of the Women's Manyano concerning one of their Rules. The Synod defined the rule and called upon the loyal members...to observe the Rule': MMS 348.

music, to play both the Black and White Notes of the human pianoforte'.[9] Despite her heavy hand of authority, Mrs. Allcock was acknowledged by the Manyano as 'a mother kind and loving' who 'had a big heart'; her return to England in 1934 with her husband marked the end of an era. Membership had doubled to some six and a half thousand, but tighter central control made it not unmanageable; dress was being standardised; fifteen years of money-raising had been rewarded. Mrs. Allcock's presidency is the best documented of the four white women who held the post; it was also the most notable.

Although Bottrill succeeded Allcock as District Chairman in mid-1934, his wife, of whom it was written in 1933, 'She will not touch the Manyano', did not become Prayer Union President. She instead held the position of Treasurer until Bottrill's retirement in 1944, and successive white chairmen's wives filled that post into the 1960's (as had Mrs. Allcock), 'to safeguard that moneys do not go west!'[10] The Presidency was filled from 1934-7 by Mrs. Kate Kidwell, whose 'great regret' was her inability to visit the branches, though the male District Chairman met the women whenever possible in the course of his journeyings.[11] As the wife of a minister to a white congregation in Germiston, Mrs. Kidwell was perforce an immobile president compared with Mrs. Allcock. The reluctance of the Chairman's wife to assume spiritual leadership may also have made the situation awkward and contributed to the white officials' conclusion that the African women 'had reached a stage when they could be trusted with

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9 Wesleyan Methodist Church Directory of the Transvaal and Swaziland District (WMDT) (1924-5), 48, (1926-7), 35; Farewell Address to Mrs. Allcock (in her daughter's possession). On the Aggrey illustration see Ch. 8, section a).

10 MMS 844, Allcock to Noble, 28 June 1933; Manyano-Kopano

11 Cory Library, Pams 2, The Methodist Church of South Africa. Transvaal and Swaziland District Annual Synod, Pretoria 1935. Report of 'African Women's Prayer and Service Union' by K. Kidwell.

the leadership of their own people'.[12] The 1937 convention therefore chose its first African woman president, who took charge for 1938-9, after which three-year terms were instituted.

Mrs. Kidwell's presidency in a sense represented the re-entry into the Methodist mainstream of that element forced out after Mrs. Gqosho's rebuff back in 1910. Mrs. Kidwell had helped supervise the Johannesburg Prayer Union of the Primitive Methodist church, which had as its nucleus women who had followed the Gqoshos in their change of denomination in 1915 and were among the 250 Africans who thereby gave the small Primitive church its most significant membership boost. Seven of these women raised £25 to pay for a thousand mile round trip in 1919 to Aliwal North, the headquarters of the Primitives, and Zastron in the Orange Free State, one of the church's strongholds. Their purpose was to express gratitude for their reception into the Primitives on behalf of Mrs. Gqosho, who had died during the war, and to recruit members for their prayer union. When it was regularised later that year, it had some seventy members. The special prayer weekends and conferences it held through the 1920's at Witwatersrand venues were often open to participation by women from other churches, no doubt welcomed to give to a church always numerically insignificant, a greater sense of a mass gathering. The style of sequential singing, speaking and praying (and some sleeping!) through the night was one they shared with other churches, while the Free State conferences were strongly reminiscent of the Wesleyan model in their preaching, business and prayer meetings, the processions in the location prior to revival services, and the red blouses worn.[13] The Primitive

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12 Manyano-Kopano.

13 This paragraph based on MMS 1142, 1144, Primitive Methodist (PM) Foreign Reports, Johannesburg, March, Sept., and Dec. 1919, Sept. 1927; The Herald (August 1922), 78, (Feb. 1928), 24-6. For an ecumenical Reef conference, see Appendix 2.

Methodists were absorbed by the Wesleyans, to form the Methodist Church in 1932, to coincide with the union of three Methodist churches in Britain.

As the successive white presidents were most in evidence at annual conventions, and even there dependent on interpreters for communication, it is clear that for local Manyano branches it was the local leader who mattered most. She was always the minister's wife, if he were married; if the congregation had only a paid evangelist, his wife could only head the Manyano if she was suitable. Ministers' wives were, by implication, always suitable. Bottrill as Chairman was 'greatly impressed by the ability and devoted zeal of the wives of our African ministers; they form the backbone of the movement and their work ensures its sanity and stability'. While this pattern of authority might impose a burden of expectation on a minister's wife to be active and lead, it correspondingly excluded other suitable women who lacked ascribed status because their husbands were otherwise employed. As one member asserted of the leadership opportunities in the social welfare-orientated National Council of African Women set up in 1936, it was an attraction that one did not have to be a minister's wife.[14] That Manyano women regarded ministers' wives as ordained as well, is evident from convention programme references to 'Lay Delegates', who were given only one service to lead, all the prayer meetings being taken by ministers' wives.[15] This assumption was made explicit too in the jubilee pamphlet's description of Mrs. Alice Ngcangi, the intelligent Secretary of the movement from 1909-30, as a 'lay woman'. She provides the only, and most interesting, exception to the tenure of official posts at the head of the movement by ministers' wives. Her appointment as Vice-President, then the top African position, for 1931-3, in succession to

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14 TM (Nov. 1934), 4; Conversations at Methodist Ministers' Wives Retreat, Roodepoort, 5 Oct. 1977; Julia Wells, personal communication.

15 See Appendix 3.

Mrs. D. D. Bolani, caused an 'uproar from some of the ministers' wives. Why should they be under a lay woman?'[16] The Prayer Union thus enabled ministers' wives to consolidate their prestige as 'ordained women' and exercise a wider authority among women of the Methodist church at large.

The first Manyano Vice-President was an influential figure. Mrs. E. D. Kumalo, a Zulu, founded the Young Women's Prayer Union and did most to promote the Shilling Fund.[17] Her husband was stationed at Mahamba in Swaziland at the time of her death in 1922. Generally, however, although there is no indication where Mrs. Ngcangi lived, Manyano officials came from the Reef or Pretoria, thus underlining the domination of the movement by this key area. Possibly convenient accessibility was a factor: Mrs. Allcock and Mrs. Burnet lived in Pretoria and Mrs. Kidwell in Germiston, while Synod often met on the Reef. The second Vice-President, 1931-3, Mrs. B. Mavi, came from Randfontein, while Mrs. H. D. Hlabangane, Vice-President 1934-7, was based in Springs and her successor from 1938, Mrs. J. D. Mokoena, in Ventersdorp, west of the Reef. The Secretaries for those respective terms were Mrs. Poley of Kilnerton, Pretoria, Mrs. J. Mabona of Sophiatown, and Mrs. Maaga of Germiston. All the representatives to the Manyano Synod Committee in 1936, for example, were from this central area, and included Mrs. Mokapela of Johannesburg and Mrs. Nkomo of Benoni, while the movement's Banner Bearer, Mrs. Leah Ntuli, came from Nancefield. The first black president, Mrs. H. D. Hlabangane, was stationed in Pretoria by the time of her appointment. As her husband had accompanied the Native Labour Contingent to France as a chaplain in the First World War, it is likely that she was relatively elderly by then.

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16 Manyano-Kopano.

17 TM (Nov. 1924), 3. These two ventures are discussed in Ch. 5, sections b) and c).

The indications are that most office-bearers joined the Executive in their forties, as mature married women like the members, but distinguished by their husbands' positions and their own spiritual gifts and eloquence. Women of unusual educational attainment succeeded to Manyano leadership only in the 1940's, as the jubilee pamphlets comments on Mrs. A. E. N. Bolani's presidency from 1944-6 make clear: 'Being young, thus full of vigour and vitality, she inspired the Convention with progressive ideas, being both a teacher and nurse by profession'.[18]

The ordinary Manyano members are the group we know least about individually. They had to be full church members and undergo six months' probation before ceasing to be 'On Trial' and becoming full members of the Union. White leaders initially measured the impact of membership by criteria of pious respectability: 'The change in their bright expression, their clean, modest appearance and quiet, reverent demeanour is a striking testimony to the power of the Gospel of our Lord'. Mrs. Allcock's later appraisal of one convention was more positive:

> It would have been a revelation of the spiritual capacity of the native to such as those whose acquaintance with the native 'girl' does not extend beyond the kitchen-girl or washer-woman, to listen to the deliberations of these women for that week.[19]

She did however overlook the connection, that some of the African women present were probably indeed domestic servants or laundresses.

Although Transvaal Manyano membership was exceeded in this period

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18 Executive Committee details from the Manyano pamphlets in Cory Library, MS 15 855, and Manyano-Kopano, which also mentions the death of Mrs. D. D. Bolani in 1958 in her eighty-ninth year. This would make her about forty when she became Vice-Treasurer in 1910. Mrs. Gqosho was probably in her early forties in 1907 as her husband gave his age as fifty-one in 1915 (see n. 2 above).

19 FF (Feb. 1916), 133; TM (Nov. 1923), 25.

by that of the three large Methodist districts among the Xhosa, Sotho-Tswana and Zulu,[20] it did grow remarkably, from one less than eight in 1907, to eight hundred in 1913, to over eight thousand in 1939. Membership figures were recorded systematically from 1921 (Table 15). Only three sets of branch membership figures for the period were traced, for 1933, 1935 and 1940. These show that Reef branches provided just over a quarter of the total membership. The biggest individual branches in 1933 lay southwest and southeast of the Reef: Ventersdorp had 253 full members and Mahamba 225, while Mafeking with 343 was the largest of all (Table 16).

The most well documented aspect of the Methodist Manyano was the annual convention, of which glowing descriptions by white leaders were regularly published in church periodicals. The weekly meetings, being both less spectacular and more routine, and under the control of black women, attracted less comment:

> Given an energetic and consecrated native minister's wife the Manyano is an immense power for good in the native Circuit. The members make a 'plan' and conduct meetings in every place. They frequently accompany the local preacher or minister to his appointment and help with prayer and song. They visit the sick and dying. They supervise the Young Women and give counsel and advice. When their Church is raising funds for Missionary or extension work the Manyano is the first to come forward...But to see the Prayer Union at its best is to see it in its Annual Convention.[21]

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20 South African Manyano Members by District 1940:

Cape	Grahamstown	Queenstown	Clarkebury	Kimberley & Bloemfontein	Natal	Transvaal & Swaziland
369	4,060	5,453	10,568	10,278	7,722	6,699

From: Minutes of Annual Conference Methodist Church of South Africa, 1940, 246-7.

21 Allcock Papers, 'African Women's Prayer Union (Manyano)...' Ts. by Mrs. Allcock (1933).

The Missionary Society once went so far as to rate the Convention, next to Synod itself, 'the most important annual event in the District'.[22]

As with the leadership, conventions centred on the Southern Transvaal with due acknowledgement of the importance of Swaziland and Mafeking (Table 17). The high point numerically was reached in 1920 at Evaton, when six hundred women arrived with songs and laughter, their bundles of food and clothing (and some with babies) on their backs, some having travelled for two or three days, others for five days from Swaziland. Mutual greeting provided 'a time of great hilarity, and of joyous, affectionate expression'. Even after the Synod ruling limiting delegate numbers, however, there were frequently as many as five hundred women at the final communion service of the convention, although no branch could send more than six delegates altogether: one for every fifty members by the mid-1930's, plus the minister's wife or chairwoman, plus the Young Women's delegate, all of whom would then have accommodation found for them by the local congregation. Without the railways, which offered group concessions too, it would have been much harder for these large groups of women to gather, though lorries, ox wagons, foot and even hired cars were used on occasion. 400 uniformed women took up five coaches of the train to Makapanstad in 1923; in 1931 women travelled to Heidelberg from Mafeking and Bloemhof in the west, Sekhukhuniland and Louis Trichardt in the north, and remote parts of north Swaziland in the east. The contagious enthusiasm of the large assemblies, unattainable in small isolated groups, the enjoyment of sociability, the sense of pride and freedom in setting off in style as women together, all come through in

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22 Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS), Annual Report 1931, 72.

convention descriptions.[23]

But prayer was 'the supreme business for which the delegates came', and each day at the week-long convention began with a prayer meeting at 6 a.m., or sometimes soon after four in the morning, in an excess of zeal and the absence of clocks. From the first, women from reticent England were struck by African female spiritual eloquence: 'These native women have wonderful power in prayer, and they use it to the full. The meetings for testimony were also very striking'. 'Unlike many Christian friends of a lighter hue, there was no unwillingness to speak. On the contrary, no sooner did one sister finish her story, than two or three were on their feet'. The singing, too, was 'indescribable'. Within the first few years, a pattern of four meetings a day was established which endured into the late 1930's. Entrenched fixtures on the programme, in addition to the dawn prayer, by then included a welcome from local dignitaries (from Chief Montsoia or the Secretary for Native Affairs to the Mayor of Springs) and a visit by the local white Methodist Women's Auxiliary. There would be a roll call of delegates, the payment of circuit financial contributions, evangelistic, temperance and testimony meetings, a memorial service for members who had died in the past year, and a communion service

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23 FF (Sept. 1921), 233; Cory MS 15 855, Mrs. Kidwell newsletter (1935). TM (Nov. 1931), 18. In 1938, even though the convention had its first black president, contact with white women persisted: two WA speakers, one of them Mrs. Cox, together with Mrs. Bridgman addressed the women. The insistence on restricted numbers of delegates, while making for more streamlined efficiency, perhaps prevented Manyano conventions from growing, as they did in the manyano of the United Methodist Church in Rhodesia in the 1940's and 1950's, to camp meetings attended by five or ten thousand people. See F. D. Muzorewa, 'Through Prayer to Action: The Rukwadzano of Rhodesia', in T. Ranger and J. Weller (eds.), Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa (London 1975). Gatherings of that size one usually associates with large independent churches like the Zion Christian Church or the Nazarites, and they would be difficult for any church to organise in an urban area. But white ideas of appropriateness may have curbed a development in this direction.

as a fitting climax. Other sessions might discuss, as in 1923 for example, 'Health in the Home, Duty of a Christian Mother to her Children, The Claim of the Sunday School'.[24] As this heavy schedule was followed with unwearied zeal from morning to night, the Primitive Methodist leader who justified their full programme as 'giving little time for gossip or the temptations which might attract in the town', was possibly worrying unduly.[25]

b) Anglican Women's Help Society and Mothers' Union

The first woman worker appointed to Reef Anglican churches in 1905 found the African women 'not so promising' as the children: they were 'very independent as a rule', glad to be visited but reluctant to come to an instruction class.[26] It was her successor who began regular prayer meetings at the women's own invitation. Soon after Deaconess Julia Gilpin arrived with two helpers in November 1907, she started weekly visits to the married quarters on nearby mines to hold classes for women, travelling 166 miles by train one week, for example. She would give a short instruction, usually through interpreters, in the small corrugated iron school-cum-chapel, then hymns would be sung and prayers said, in which the women often joined. Finding conditions in these mine locations rendered it 'almost impossible for a decent woman to retain her purity and self-respect', since so many couples living there were in fact not married, the Deaconess felt 'a simple Guild' was needed to bind their Anglican women together and help them lead a better life.

By 1908, therefore, she had started a branch of the Church of England Women's Help Society (WHS), with ninety members, all communicants, in

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24 FF (Sept. 1921), 232, (April 1913), 253, (Feb. 1916), 132; TM (Nov. 1923), 30. See also Appendix 3 and the 1935 programme from the same source.

25 Advance (Feb. 1928), 24. The alluring town in question was Rouxville, OFS!

26 Mission Field (MF), (Oct. 1906), 318-9.

various places. Each member was given a rule card in her own language, which appeared 'to be very much liked'; though most of the women had not been to school, some Xhosa and Zulu members could read and write well. On joining, they promised to pray morning and evening, read the Bible daily, attend church and Holy Communion regularly, keep a Christian standard of life, and do some definite work for God. The women in more distant Reef locations - Boksburg, Klipspruit, Springs - could be visited only once a month, and further afield like Heidelberg or Vereeniging even less often.[27] The Deaconess's choice of society made the Transvaal unique as the only diocese of the South African Anglican communion not to link its African women with the Mothers' Union once regular prayer meetings had been organised.

The Women's Help Society[28] was started in England in 1879 by Mrs. E. C. Papillon, who broke away from the Girls' Friendly Society as she found its membership prerequisite of past, and not simply present continuing, chastity impracticable in her work among urban factory girls.[29] The Society hoped to help women and girls to Christian virtue

> By giving its members a simple Rule of Life, which reminds them of their duty when they might forget it.
> By helping them to use their Church privileges.
> By giving them bright, friendly Meetings, Classes and Addresses, Provident Club, and Lending Library.

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27 USPG, WW Reports Africa, Dss Julia and Marion Trist 1908; †MF (Oct. 1909) 308, (Oct. 1911), 319, (Nov. 1911), 349; SWM Journal (Oct. 1936), 19-20. †WW Letters Africa, Dss Julia to Miss Mackenzie, 12 Sept. 1909.

28 At first called the Young Women's Help Society, but subsequently open to pre-teen girls ('Little Sisters'), adolescent girls and married women.

29 Central Rule 3 of the GFS read: 'No girl who has not borne a virtuous character to be admitted as a Member; such character being lost, the Member to forfeit her card'. On the split, see B. Harrison, 'For Church, Queen and Family: The Girls' Friendly Society 1874-1920', Past & Present, 61, (1973), 118; M. Heath-Stubbs, Friendship's Highway, Being the History of the Girls' Friendly Society, 1875-1925 (London, 1926), 8, and A. L. Money, History of the Girls' Friendly Society (London, 1911), 18-19, 98.

It had over 150 branches in England and abroad by 1904 but, no doubt partly because the Society restricted its membership to Anglican communicants and remained primarily parochial, renouncing centralization as 'suicidal', it was utterly outclassed by the runaway success of its morally more rigid counterparts in purity and family efforts, the Girls' Friendly Society and the Mothers' Union.[30]

Unlike the GFS, the WHS did not necessarily expel members for 'a single breach' of any part of their Rule, and eschewed inquiry into the past life of those interested in joining.[31] Perhaps Deaconess Julia chose the WHS for this more forgiving, relative flexibility about members' previous sexual conduct; certainly, rigid condemnation of unchastity proved increasingly inappropriate in Johannesburg. Another Johannesburg deaconess commented in 1924 that women trained in rescue work among unmarried mothers in England

> find themselves rather perplexed for we have to deal with our cases more leniently for we have to consider their inherited 'un'-moral background, I hope you will understand that we do not condone the sin but we do have to take their point of view into consideration.[32]

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30 Women's Help Tidings (Aug. 1904), 2; The Workers' Paper (July 1892), 3. Launched on upper class Anglican leadership and undenominational, largely working class membership, the GFS had 1,707 branches by 1911 and the MU 6,969. Harrison, 'For Church', 126.

31 Women's Help Society, Workers' Paper (Feb. 1895), 4-5, 10.

32 USPG, CWW, Letters Received Africa, Dss Vigor to Miss Saunders, 4 Jan. 1924. The MU in the Transkei took no notice of sin committed as a heathen but did not admit women who 'fell' after conversion; The Workers' Paper (Oct. 1920), 198. Divorce was a greater obstacle in MU eyes than premarital pregnancy. The MU's first Object, 'to uphold the Sanctity of Marriage', added in 1892, became in the twentieth century its distinctive characteristic, so that opposition to divorce at times seemed to outweigh in importance the other Objects, which were to awaken mothers to their responsibility in training their children and to band women together in united prayer and example. See New Dimensions. The Report of the Bishop of Willesden's Commission on the Objects and Policy of the Mothers' Union (London, 1972), 4-10, 23.

The contrast in rules was what struck one African woman who had been a Mothers' Union member in the Cape and joined the Society on moving to the Transvaal. Whether married by Christian marriage, or a divorcee, or an unmarried mother,

> all the women who were interested to join, were allowed to come along...there was no strictness, and nearly every woman was so interested to become a member because there, that's where we had a chance of preaching, those who were able to preach, and those who had that inspiration of praying, were allowed to pray.[33]

Like the GFS and the MU, the WHS in England pictured the relationship of leaders and members, though belonging to different classes, in terms of the family hierarchy. The workers (i.e. 'lady' leaders) were like older sisters in charge of younger, looking up to the Lady President 'as to a mother', with the parish priest the father of all.[34] The conviction that class superiority bestowed superior wisdom permeated such late Victorian organisations. However, the remote and dictatorial leadership of some Mothers' Meetings which infuriated English working class women,[35] was largely spared WHS members on the Witwatersrand, because expense, distances, the small size of the missionary staff and its frequent ineptness at African languages combined to keep supervision to a minimum. Deaconess Julia's successors continued her pattern of getting prayer meetings started, then visiting them when possible, but largely leaving the women to meet alone each week. With the additional input of revivalistic style, it became possible for even the nominally 'imported'WHS to develop a life of its own.

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33 Interview, Mrs. Nettie Mguli, 13 Feb. 1978.

34 Workers' Paper (Feb 1895), 4.

35 M. L. Davies (ed.), Life As We Have Known It (London, 1977), 40.

The three years just prior to the First World War were a time of expansion and consolidation for Reef missionary work among African women, facilitated by the availability of three or four women missionaries throughout this period to travel round giving instruction. In 1911, they paid over one thousand visits to Reef mine locations, which were still then their main sphere of operation, frequently giving several small classes per visit, to female catechumens, confirmation candidates and penitents, so that the WHS meeting did not form their only contact with the women and girls of the congregations. From 1911, the work in Johannesburg's town centre developed more, the missionaries visiting the sick and holding prayer meetings among black women living in the Doornfontein slums; there were about fifty slum yards within a square mile of the Buxton Street mission house, each containing anything from six to sixty huts. Bolstered by this wider ministry to female Anglicans, eleven Reef mine compound churches were holding weekly Women's Help Society meeting by 1913, at Crown Reef, Roodepoort United, Bantjes, Maraisburg, Croesus, Langlaagte, Ferreira Deep, Village Main Reef, George Goch, Nourse and Cleveland, while there were also strong centres in the town locations of Germiston and Boksburg on the east Rand. Numbers in all these meetings were increasing, while more and more places were sending to the missionaries for a 'Sister' to come and start women's meetings. Many of these, after the initial gathering, could only get visits once in six months, so African 'Guardian Members' were appointed to ensure regular conduct of the meetings. As one woman missionary was that year in charge of twenty-two mine locations and farm kraals, the impossibility of visiting each weekly was clear.[36]

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36 Diocese of Pretoria Report 1912, 132; USPG, WW Letters Africa, E.D. Earthy to Miss Gurney, 5 Nov. 1911; MF (Oct. 1913), 309-10; The Kingdom (July 1913); USPG, E, Theodora Williams, 1913; CWW Letters, Williams to Miss Saunders, 30 Oct. 1913.

Pressure from the African Anglican women for greater independence from white direction was mounting concurrently with WHS membership. Already in 1913, Deaconess Julia noted that, especially because many of the Rand women were from the Cape and better educated than those of the Transvaal, the time was coming 'when they will be able, as they are already desirous, to take a larger share themselves in conducting their own meetings'. It is not surprising, though, that she could not find suitable candidates for the trained African Biblewomen she favoured as such indigenous leaders. The model derived from church work in London and India, of a full-time spinster employee giving elementary Bible teaching, lacked the appropriateness in most African eyes of the authority structure which they were evolving, dominated by clergy wives. A middle-aged unmarried woman did not have the same authority and respectability for Africans of that era as she did for those from a background of middle class English philanthropy. The prestigious place the WHS was assuming in church life was confirmed when Africans with daughters at St. Agnes' School became anxious that these girls, many of whom would marry teachers or clergy, 'should have a thorough religious knowledge and be capable of leading the women in the Prayer Meetings'. The desire for self-sufficiency had grown so much by 1915 that 'in one important location, the native women in the prayer meeting were reported to be praying that no white priest or white woman worker should come to them at all'.[37]

These African aspirations were assuaged largely by white default. Supervision, especially of distant places, diminished during the war because of staff upheavals. The need was particularly acute throughout 1919, when Amy Kent had single-handed oversight of Women's Help Society

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37 USPG, E, Dss Julia, 1913, Alice Young, 1915; 'Pilot Letters' Describing the Work of Women Missionaries of S.P.G. (London, 1915), 32.

members. She found 'much tact' was required, for the Africans were 'very touchy' if one attempted to 'boss' them. Her role was one of arbitration; she was called in to settle quarrels between rivals, confirm the rules and decide cases of misdemeanours to which local leaders shut their eyes for fear of unpopularity. By that time, Thursday was prayer-meeting day, and women had won a strong and influential position in Reef congregations. Every WHS member was required 'to undertake some little bit of church work'. It was they who visited and helped the sick, took collections and organised fund-raising concerts for church equipment and buildings, and kept the churches clean, washing linen and rubbing brass. Many of them Xhosa women who would return to the Cape once they had earned enough to send their children to good schools, they made 'very good loyal Church members, very regular in Church attendance, very sympathetic with one another in sickness and sorrow, very full of faith and possessing great powers of extempore prayer'.[38]

There is little indication of how formalised the Society was in this first decade, although a missionary singled out for comment one outstation in the Potchefstroom district which had so many members in 1915 that a Secretary of rudimentary literacy was appointed. By the mid-1920's the Anglican women were 'bound' to a uniform for prayer - black skirts and doeks (headscarves), and white jackets - as well as to a day, and the WHS was more recognisably an organized movement:

> The ideals and rules have gripped them in a surprising way. There are nearly 50 branches now scattered up and down the Reef and in the country districts, each branch with its own leader, usually the wife of the Native priest, deacon or catechist. She has an assistant, a secretary, and a treasurer to help her and in some cases a committee.

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38 USPG, CWW, Kent to Miss Saunders, 20 Feb., 28 April, 2 Aug., and 19 Nov. 1919. For further confirmation of female financial skills, for example in collecting church shillings from those in arrears and holding a bazaar, see CPSA AB 627, St. Cyprian's Church Council Minute Book, 25 April 1923 and 28 July 1926.

The leader might have to supervise up to twenty small groups in sub-districts or on farms, under often illiterate sub-leaders. A clergy-wife often had to leave the supervision of such groups to her husband on his travels as priest, particularly because by the end of the 1930's, as the level of education rose among Transvaal black women, such priests' wives were frequently themselves full-time school teachers.[39] There continued to be only one, or at most two, women missionaries free to visit and guide branches. Deaconess Elsie Vigor, head of Reef women's work from 1920 to 1933, acted as WHS President, as did her successor, Agnes Beale, but as both were also in charge of the Buxton Street hostel, they were somewhat tied geographically, so that members frequently had to come to them with queries.

Methodist Manyano conferences were an annual highlight unrivalled in length and size by those of other mission churches. The earliest reference to an annual service and conference of WHS members is for 1919, though a Native Women Helpers' Conference held in July 1914 under Father Hill may have been the first of its kind for leaders. The conferences in the 1920's were a one-day affair, invariably held on the Reef because its congregations could provide the necessary large hall or church, overnight accommodation and easy accessibility from both town and country. Over two hundred women turned up to the united service held at St. Cyprian's, Johannesburg, in 1922 for example, and followed it with a conference on the conduct of their weekly meetings, another church service, and a procession. In 1924, the conference was to be held at Krugersdorp on Ascension Day and, Deaconess Elsie promised somewhat defensively, 'The native women could talk for as long as they liked'. Some special training

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39 USPG, E, Earthy to Miss Saunders, 11 Nov. 1915; TSR (periodical of the Transvaal and Southern Rhodesia missionary association) (Jan. 1927), 2; MU Johannesburg, 'Mothers Union Bantu Section. Johannesburg Diocese. Sept. 1939'.

for branch leaders was provided; the 1928 conference, for instance, was preceded by a Quiet Day for leaders. By the late 1930's, the annual gathering was being held over two days, still in Reef towns, attended by some 150 delegates. Like the Methodist conference, it had developed regular features - a sermon by the Bishop of Johannesburg, the diocesan president to open proceedings, meetings for business and reports - and its delegates similarly displayed great zeal and vitality.[40]

Apart from the use of the English rule-card and badge, little record has been traced of a lively link between the Reef African members and the Women's Help Society in England,[41] although the Johannesburg women sent greetings to the Society and held a great Eucharist at Crown Mines for the fiftieth anniversary in 1929. In 1936, Mrs. Stanton, the Society's Organising Secretary in England, visited South Africa and was one of a number of white speakers at the Johannesburg WHS conference in Sophiatown, attended by two hundred African women, eighty of them delegates. But this personal visit after three decades of the WHS in the Transvaal was obviously part of a last-ditch attempt by a dying church society to revive its fortunes. In 1937, the Women's Help Society, in the uncharitable words of MU Central President Mrs. Woods, 'committed suicide in London', leaving Reef African women members of branches of a non-existent society.

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40 The Kingdom (March 1920); CPSA, AB 384, Diocese of Pretoria Synod Records, 1915, Report of the Women's Missionary Committee, and AB 768, Diocese of Pretoria Native Conference Minutes, 1924; 'After Twenty Years' 1922 Report of Missionary Work of the Community of the Resurrection in the Southern Transvaal; USPG, E, W. F. Hill, 1928; The Watchman (Feb. 1941), 7. Large numbers of women were simply and cheaply fed at such conferences. 'We know nothing about these salads, custards and all this...if there is meat, stamped mealies, potatoes, cabbage, it is finished'. Interview, Mrs. Mguli.

41 As an organization lacking central headquarters before it became defunct forty years ago, the WHS appears to have left no traceable body of papers. Neither the National Register of Archives nor Church House could find any records, while the British Library holds only a few isolated periodical copies.

Mrs. Woods then made her society the chief beneficiary of this situation. While touring South Africa, she visited the Johannesburg diocese and spoke to a conference of 250 women delegates at Benoni in August 1938, all but two of whom voted after discussion in favour of the Mothers' Union as their new Society. Women in the diocese of Pretoria similarly transferred membership.[42]

The transfer from WHS to MU theoretically meant that African Anglican women were now part of a multi-racial women's church organisation. The wife of a leading white priest had been Diocesan President for some years, but the MU had by 1938 only a paltry white membership of seventy-eight in three branches. This was due to the long-entrenched strength of an alternative association among European women, the Church Women's Society. Thus, while Miss Beale, helped by an advisory council of African women, was appointed MU Vice-President to take account of the new African influx, her constituency totally swamped the rest. It is clear from later comments that white MU leaders had hoped to scrutinise the marital status and eligibility of all prospective African members before enrolment, and to ensure that they understood especially MU inflexibility on divorce. They were, however, quite unable to stem the tide:

> Unfortunately there was not sufficient emphasis placed on the difference between the 'Women's Help Society' and the Mothers' Union and members were admitted in large numbers and before they had had time to take in the full implications of MU membership.

As a result, twenty-seven African branches of the Mothers' Union existed by 1939 in the Johannesburg diocese, with 2,191 members. By the end of the Second World War, the estimated African membership was around 3,500.[43]

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42 CPSA, Litaba tsa Kereke (March 1929); Bantu World, 4 July 1936; Cape to the Zambezi, (Nov. 1938), 11; The Workers' Paper (Dec. 1938), 303.

43 MU Johannesburg, 'Johannesburg Diocesan Mothers' Union. Notes re History'. For scepticism about the African grasp of MU Aims and Objects see also 'History of the Mothers' Union in Johannesburg For The Mothers'

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The first black Vice-President to represent the African majority, Mrs. Mabuto, was appointed only in 1948, Miss Beale having retired two years previously. Even into the 1960's, the President was a white woman, though the white enrolment, meeting in separate branches, continued to be minute by comparison. Thus, probably largely because the Mothers' Union was nominally a multi-racial organisation, African titular leadership of it came late by comparison with the all-black Methodist Manyano; the latter elected its first African woman president in 1937, whereas the Johannesburg MU waited until 1974.

The full impact of the change from WHS to MU was delayed by the war and not really felt until well beyond our period. In the early 1950's, under the Bishop's wife, Mrs. Reeves, the common elements shared with other manyanos - extempore praying and preaching, compulsory uniforms, fund-raising, evangelism - were vigorously combatted. In addition, the requirement of indissoluble Christian marriage was strictly enforced and practical instruction in sewing and sex-education were introduced. All these innovations met with resistance from older members, in patent conflict with younger mothers.[44] The attempt to change the nature of African women's long-established weekly prayer-meetings did not destroy the appeal of the Mothers' Union, no doubt in part because the attempt was not entirely successful. At the start of the 1970's, when South Africa constituted the overseas Anglican province in which the MU was most widely established, it was the two dioceses of St. John's (i.e. the Transkei) and Johannesburg

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Union Lambeth Book. December 1956'.

44 CPSA, Pamphlets, Johannesburg, The Mothers' Union Diocese of Johannesburg. Diocesan Regulations together with rules for use in African branches (Johannesburg, 1953); Brandel-Syrier, Black Woman, 92-5. Interviews with Fr Leo Rakale, 14 Feb. 1978, and Mrs. Mguli, whose comment on the change to MU meaning the 'divorcees and unmarried girls had to be cut off', appears to refer to Mrs. Reeves's time.

which provided the largest MU membership.[45]

c) American Board Isililo

The African women's organisation in the churches of the American Board Mission on the Witwatersrand was by far the smallest, and is the most sparsely documented, of the three movements here analysed. It could not have had more than a hundred full members by the end of the 1930's, by contrast with the two thousand or more Reef members of both Anglican and Methodist prayer associations. What came to be known as the Isililo of the American Board was by definition a feature of only that handful of congregations which the Mission had in African family residential areas - in Doornfontein, Western Native Township, Germiston ('one notices an unusually large number of women here', a missionary observed in 1924), and finally Orlando. The ABM's extensive mine compound evangelism necessarily excluded women almost as totally as it did children. When the Board's Crown Mine adherents were organised as a church in 1921, for instance, only two of the 159 charter members, 90 per cent of whom came from Inhambane, were women. In 1935, despite having 102 religious meeting places and a large number of adherents in compound night school groups, the ABM had less than a thousand communicant members in its five organised churches on the Reef; men outnumbered women by ten to one, so that female members totalled under a hundred.[46]

Although the Isililo sprang up in southern Natal on the initiative

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45 St. John's: 457 branches and 7,644 members, all African; Johannesburg: 143 and 5,634 respectively, mostly African. New Dimensions, 216.

46 ABC: 15.4 v. 39, H. B. Catlin, Transvaal Report 1923-4; v.38, Bridgman to Barton, 9 March 1921; v. 42, Tabular Views Zulu Mission 1935. This last showed 830 male members to eighty-two female, a drop since 1930, when 1,431 members altogether (no sex indicated) were recorded.

of African women in 1912, the work among Reef women appears to have been carried on separately in the subsequent decade. The lack of formal links was counterbalanced by the regular contact between the two areas, which probably served to assimilate both to a common model. During the First World War, the ABM's 'mothers' meetings' were 'getting at the heart of the mothers', inducing some to attend by serving tea and cake once a month. The work drew on systematic visiting of the Doornfontein yards. In 1918, once the dissident Mvuyana had been replaced by Rev. Goba, his wife freed Mrs. Bridgman from some of the weekly meetings so she could hold services for women at Germiston and Randfontein, further afield. The Doornfontein church also hosted monthly gatherings, culminating in refreshments, for women from other parts of the Reef. This new African autonomy may have served to establish the day and the method of the women's association, for by 1919, the ABM Doornfontein women, numbering some two dozen, were meeting for prayer every Thursday, which they enjoyed very much, each taking her turn in leading the meeting. They left the spinster missionary, Miss Weir, to take a prayer meeting in a yard for women who did not go to church, and would get Mrs. Bridgman to give them an occasional address.[47]

Further expansion to Western Native Township in 1922 was Weir's doing, and in 1923, Johannesburg congregations sent their first woman delegate to the annual Natal conference of the Isililo. When interest and attendance on the Reef were reported on the increase the following year, the official Natal title of the prayer movement was used for the first time - 'The Isililo is very active' - which serves to date, perhaps, the beginning of a formal connection between the two areas. Despite the self-reliance shown so early by Doornfontein, the missionary women continued, in conjunction

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47 ABC: 15.4 v.29, Acting Superintendent's Report, Johannesburg, 1916, and Annual Report Transvaal 1918; ABC: 15.5 v.3, Weir to Miss Lamson, 25 Oct. 1919, 4 Feb. 1921.

with pastors' wives, to give help in planning and running the meetings, which they saw as strengthening African women in such Christian graces as temperance, peaceableness and purity. Miss Weir continued to visit the yards weekly in the 1920's, as

> the people like their own people to come to them even if they do not come to church. In this way we hope to get more women to come to the meetings. Our Native women are afraid to visit these yards alone even if two or three are together so I go with them and we talk with the people and give out Scripture leaflets.

Perhaps Alice Weir's comment in 1926, when Mrs. Bridgman was still in the USA after her husband's death, confirms not only the continued importance of the missionary wife despite growing black female autonomy, but also the perennial difficulties of the spinster in leading the married: 'the women are always asking when Mrs. Bridgman is coming. It is a joy to see how they love her'. While Mrs. Phillips also shared in the women's meetings and the Native Women's Christian Temperance Union in the 1920's, she tried in addition to devote one day a week to visiting the educated wives of the kind of men her husband's Social Centre aimed to attract; she had a list of some sixty women from ABM Natal schools.[48]

The Johannesburg Isililo held annual conferences, as the Natal movement had done from its inception; at first timed for the Easter weekend, conferences were held later in the year under Dexter Taylor's successor, because of the inappropriateness to Lent of the arguments about money which always seemed to accompany annual conferences. The Reef women came to wear the same uniform as in Natal, black skirts, white blouses and pink ribbons. Their organisational structure echoed Natal's, where African ministers had advised the Isililo women at the start of the need to elect a chairman, secretary and treasurer. There, most of the early office

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48 ABC: 15.5 v.3, Weir to Miss Lamson, 31 Jan. 1922; Umlandu Wesililo Samabandla; ABC: 15.4 v.39, Transvaal Annual Report 1924, p.4, and

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bearers chosen were ministers' wives; leadership was similarly ascribed to the handful of pastors' wives on the Rand. One of the annual gatherings of the Natal Isililo in the 1920's was vividly described by Mrs. Cowles, sister of Fred Bridgman and herself married to a Board missionary:

> This is their very first effort at self expression in the way of an organisation they have ever attempted you know, I am sure a lot of the delicious feelings of Woman's rights, give spice to the occasion. You should see those Officers sitting up front, in their white caps and blouses and pink ribbon badges, and you should see the body of the church filled halfway down with these white and pink uniforms! The row of delegates sitting clean across the front of the church always interests me! My! Don't they look literary, those W.B.M. girls of yours, educated and with pads in their hands, scribbling down notes as fast as they could write. Reports to take back to their Station! I believe our Zulu women will show the men how to do it yet! Wouldn't that be a joke? They are in the lead at Umzumbe already![49]

1925, p.5; ABC: 15.5 v.5, Weir to Miss Emerson, 15 Jan. 1925, 25 June 1926; SOAS Microfilm (Mf) Phillips News, 3 Nov. 1925; Missionary Herald (April 1928), 137.

49 Interview, Mrs. Mavimbela, 3 March 1978; ABC: 15.4 v.48, Amy Cowles to Miss Lamson, 22 April 1926. W.B.M. stands for Women's Board of Missions. Ribbons were a favoured 'badge' in ABM work. See Mrs. Cowles's letter, Missionary Herald (April 1926), 152, describing how those who took a definite stand for purity, renounced beer and gave up tobacco wore respectively white, blue and red ribbons to proclaim the fact.

CHAPTER 5

THEIR COMMON ELEMENTS

a) Revivalistic Praying and Preaching

Evangelistic forays among traditionalists and lukewarm Christians alike, helped spread and sustain women's prayer movements. The weekly prayer meetings, across the denominations, invariably featured a different member responsible for leading each time; she would preach on a Scripture text and then be supported by other women, who would take up the theme in short extempore addresses or testimonies of their own. This preaching was followed by a time of sequential, spontaneous praying out loud by individual members. These developments can be accounted for on a number of levels. First, certain traditional values and practices predisposed Africans to favour such a style of religious behaviour. Secondly, the late nineteenth century germination period of women's prayer movements coincided with influential revival movements among the Xhosa and Zulu which presented and popularised this very model of fervent exhortation and prayer. In addition, this model met with a particularly fruitful response from women, I would argue, both because it drew on a kind of burgeoning female religious independency, and because of its congruence with funeral behaviour considered appropriate to women in Nguni society.

Chief among the predisposing factors in traditional society were the importance of oral expression, the nature of prayer and the customary preference for giving all present at a gathering a say. Missionaries in South Africa echoed those elsewhere who noted what born orators Africans were, and how fond they were of public speaking. The esteem for skilful oratory and the importance of verbal communication generally in a non-literate society should not surprise us; oral forms are bound to have more salience among those 'who do not use the written word for formalized transactions or artistic expression'. Christian preaching was facilitated

by this characteristic. One example will have to suffice. The American Board Deputation sent from Boston in 1903 was particularly impressed by

> the native gift of speech, shall we call it of eloquence? which seems to belong to the Zulu in a remarkable degree. The ease with which they utter their thoughts is extraordinary. They do it with vigor and a power to command attention. Of course there is peril in volubility, and too much should not be made of it. But it is refreshing to find those who have received the message of the gospel so ready to tell it to others...There are few dumb Christians among them.[1]

Ruth Finnegan has drawn attention to the 'marked development' among Africans since the advent of Christianity, of 'oral forms in lyrics, prayers, and testimonies, each with its own conventions and techniques', though she errs in linking it only with the proliferation of African independent churches. She suggests research is needed into, for instance, the weekly contribution of the Christian local preacher to oratory or even to oral literature. It would certainly be illuminating if a specialist in traditional African female oral literature in southern Africa could investigate the praying and preaching style of the manyanos. In manyano preaching, a verse or Bible passage is used as the basis for a variety of preaching performances or individual testimonies. This does not seem entirely unlike the process by which the 'core image' of a folktale is 'expanded during performance by the exercise of the imagination into a work of literary art'. The same process of blending 'tradition and creativity, memorization and improvization, the communal and the individual', is at work. It is noteworthy that both the teller of folktales and the manyano preacher are almost invariably mature women, often of the grandmother generation, and in both cases the audience determines the

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1 R. Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa (Oxford, 1970), 445; 'Report of the Deputation sent by the American Board to its Missions in South Africa in 1903', 22-3, in Annual Report American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions 1904.

duration of the performance, the speaker concluding when the listeners no longer participate, respond or agree, or perhaps launch into a diverting song. Thus perhaps also in such more specific ways, prayer meetings were influenced by customary patterns of oratory and story-telling. The praise-poems of traditionalist, married Zulu women, airing domestic complaint and celebrating personal identity, provide equally striking resemblances. The performer vigorously recites and dances her poem to a singing, clapping, convivially responding circle of women.[2]

Aylward Shorter has called prayer 'the central phenomenon of religion', most appropriately, for in prayer the believer acknowledges that a supernatural power exists to be communed with, and that his relationship with that power is one of dependence. But it was African women's readiness to pray aloud, rather than the faith manifested in praying at all, that struck many missionaries. Both set forms and private prayer are alien to traditional society. Most traditional African prayer recorded in the literature is 'primary prayer' and spontaneous, not 'secondary' or formal, literary and impersonal prayer.[3] There is little evidence of individual, silent prayer, though reverent periods of silence occurred in ancestor worship. Private devotions seem rather to have consisted of simple offerings of food, drink and tobacco. When the family gathered to pray to the ancestors, the senior male led the prayers, though women sometimes interjected approval or reminders. There seem to have been important continuities with the style and content of subsequent manyano prayer:

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2 Finnegan, Oral Literature, 184, 91; T. Cope, 'Towards an Appreciation of Zulu Folktales as Literary Art', in E. Preston-Whyte and J. Argyle (eds.), Social System and Tradition in Southern Africa (Cape Town, 1978), 199, 193; H. Scheub, The Xhosa Ntsomi (Oxford, 1975); E. Gunner, 'Songs of Innocence and Experience: Women as Composers and Performers of Izibongo, Zulu Praise Poetry', Research in African Literatures, 10, 2, (1979).

3 A. Shorter, Prayer in the Religious Traditions of Africa (Nairobi, 1975), 1, 8.

traditional prayer was prayed in groups and out loud, and was sometimes dramatised in dancing or singing. It was generally extempore and stated material needs or losses in a manner 'quite free and natural', full of trust in supernatural provision. The feeling of spiritual unity it engendered, gave all the worshippers a valuable zest and strength.[4] Apart from changing the focus of prayer from ancestors to God, Christianity's key innovation would appear to have been its sanctioning of female prayer in both domestic and public groups.

It was also important that spontaneous prayer and extempore preaching are relatively democratic, unlike formal church services where one person speaks. Lengthy meetings where many women contributed, not always saying discernibly different things, while uncongenial to whites, satisfied African notions of participation and consultation, exemplified in their judicial procedure too, for example. As Comaroff notes, succinctness is little valued in traditional communal action and interpersonal relations: 'Meaning inheres in the act of taking part, of repeating the formulae or appropriate sentences, no matter how much reiteration this might involve.' A report of an Anglican conference confirms the importance of individual participation:

> Everybody who got up, broke out in prayers complaining of the lack of opportunity for all to indulge themselves in prayer. Time just seemed to fly as all were filled with the spirit of prayer.

Furthermore, when preaching is extempore and not limited to those with

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4 W. C. Willoughby, The Soul of the Bantu (London, 1928), 369-71; D. W. T. Shropshire, The Church and Primitive Peoples (London, 1938), 213-4, 228-9, 272-7. It is, however, difficult to estimate the influence of Christianity. Comaroff, 'Barolong Cosmology', 279, considers that Christianity has increased traditionalist spoken prayer to ancestors, and that slaughter and libation are the only religious acts we can know for sure took place before the missionaries came.

formal accreditation, the illiterate can compete on equal terms with the well-educated, since eloquence and zeal are the sole prerequisites. This is underlined by a Methodist woman's testimony at a convention: 'I cannot read the Book. I took the red blouse and daily I am out preaching to the heathen.'[5]

The style of female prayer meeting evolved on the Witwatersrand - emotional, highly participatory, preferably lasting all night or held at dawn - has its historical roots in the Nguni Christianity of the 1890's. The influence of Natal for the American Board, the Cape for Anglicanism, and of both areas for Methodism, is confirmed. During the revival experienced by the American Board churches in Natal in 1897, meetings for prayer and confession were often protracted, and sometimes lasted all night long. Elder Weavers, an itinerant American preacher, was the key outside evangelist involved, and left a lasting mark. 'His technique was so persuasive, and the results so astonishing, that this emotional preaching style has remained through the succeeding three generations of preachers', one Board missionary affirmed. By the time Weavers returned to South Africa in 1901-2, 'his former translators had adopted his delivery style and were building the revival method into the regular structure of the churches'.[6]

Just as had happened with Charles Pamla during Taylor's preaching

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5 Comaroff, 'Cosmology', 296; Litaba tsa Kereke (Sept. 1929), 3 (translation arranged by M. B. Yengwa); Allcock Papers, Mrs. Allcock to her family, 15 Oct. 1924. As late as the 1950's, the Reef Anglicans estimated that 40 per cent of their MU women, including most of the over-fifties, were illiterate: Brandel, 'Needs', 19, 61.

6 Annual Report of the American Board...1897, 30 (conviction of sin, followed by 'open and full confession' had been the revival's characteristic); A. F. Christoferson, Adventuring with God: The Story of the American Board Mission in South Africa (Durban, 1967), 93-4.

tour in 1867,[7] revival preaching by an outsider in partnership with black interpreters drew on and then legitimated and greatly encouraged prior evangelistic efforts initiated by African Christians. One such movement helped by the American was that of a church member at Umtwalume, for instance. Constrained to go out into the fields and pray all night for his people, then call on them to repent, he was joined in house to house preaching by his wife and two other Christian women, and the 'volunteer' band grew through meetings at night in his home. The pattern of intense night-time prayer and sequential individual exhortation on a theme followed by these Amavoluntiya as they conducted missions at other ABM stations seems unmistakably the one carried over into all women's manyanos.[8]

Not surprisingly, the women's prayer meeting being held weekly at dawn in Umtwalume just after the Boer War, perpetuated the movement's model:

> When there was sufficient light to see, a hymn was sung, the leader read a portion of Scripture, giving the helpful thoughts and strength she had received from the passage; another hymn was sung, and the meeting thrown open to those present. Thoughts suggested by the passage read, testimonies, and requests for prayer followed in quick succession. A young woman with tears streaming down her face confessed her sins, and said, 'O mothers, you know what my life has been, and all the sorrow and disgrace that have come through its sin; I throw myself into your arms and beg you to pray for me and help me to overcome.' They prayed for her then and there.[9]

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7 W. G. Mills, 'The Role of African Clergy in the Reorientation of Xhosa Society to the Plural Society in the Cape Colony, 1850-1915' (PhD, UCLA, 1975),25-7, 298 n.6; W. Taylor, Christian Adventures in South Africa (London, 1868), 523-4.

8 Mrs. Laura Mellen Robinson, 'The Volunteers', Missionary Herald (Dec. 1905), 638-41.

9 Laura Mellen, 'Zulu Women's Weekly Prayer Meeting', Life and Light for Women (March 1904), 109.

Perhaps the preference of the Volunteers' leader for women preaching particularly to other women, had the effect of splitting this indigenous missionary movement on sexual lines. But what is most noteworthy is that when such separate female groups for spiritual exhortation were revived and extended by the Isililo from 1912 onwards, their modus operandi could almost be taken for granted by some at any rate, to whom the shared praying and preaching were a familiar and satisfying indigenous outgrowth.

The same revivalism was noted at St. Cuthbert's in the Transkei from 1896. Anglican Africans there, copying other parishes, met together and went with one or two catechists to heathen kraals where, missionaries reported, 'they hold a succession of services in the night, and occasionally prolong the attack for two or three days'. Whites voiced perennial anxieties about 'unreliable conversions and unhealthy excitement'. The great interest shown when female missionaries started monthly prayer meetings for St. Cuthbert's women from 1899, issuing in the establishment of the MU in 1903, must have drawn on the zeal generated by participation in these revival services. As evening concerts of singing and recitation were becoming popular in rural areas round the turn of the century too, and were recognised by contemporaries as the Christian replacement for the 'real and original kaffir concert' of beer and dancing late into the night, it seems likely that both phenomena, ikonsati and the all-night revival meeting, owed much of their attraction to the need of the growing African Christian community for its own community entertainment and religious excitement. Even this scanty evidence indicates that Sundkler is wrong to see all-night services as an influence flowing into mission churches from independent churches; they have a long ancestry. Cape Anglicans also shared the same participatory pattern. At Tsomo in the Transkei in 1905, women spontaneously began holding prayer meetings: 'They read a passage of Scripture and one explains it and then it is discussed and then some prayers

are offered'. They elected their own leaders, urged teetotalism on members, and visited heathen women as well as the sick and bereaved.[10]

As both Anglican and Methodists were strong in the Transkei, it is not easy to establish who influenced whom when. However, three years before these Tsomo Anglican prayer-women were noted, the Methodist 'Christian Women's Association', also in the Tsomo district, engaged in exhortation, 'cries and loud supplications', in an all-night prayer-meeting reported by a white minister. Perhaps closer research in Methodist church papers generally would uncover the process by which this style of meeting spread, or indeed had its own spontaneous origins, among Sotho and Tswana peoples. At all events, by the first decade of the twentieth century, it was no longer confined to the Nguni. As distant as the area north-west of Pietersburg in 1905, unstructured informal Methodist evening prayer meetings were reported, attended mostly by women, where 'Reading, prayer, singing, and conversation followed each other quite naturally'.[11] The Transvaal Methodist Manyano was, however, more directly linked with Natal than Cape revivalism. It caught fire from the annual prayer conventions begun in Natal in 1905 by ministers' wives with their husbands' help, in order to promote, expand and unite their various circuit weekly prayer meetings.[12]

The convention Mrs. Gqosho attended was held at Edendale, a stronghold of black Methodism, which had provided the chief inspiration for Unzondelelo

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10 St. Cuthbert's Mission in the Diocese of St. John's, Kaffraria. Report for 1896, 14, 1899, 26, 1900, 22-3; 1901, 17; Occasional News from St. Cuthbert's, No. 5 (1903), 9, No. 6 (1903), 5; Sundkler, Prophets, 198; MF (Nov. 1905), 348-9. For the rural persistence of this mode of meeting, see The Workers' Paper (June 1929), 128 (an all-night MU meeting at All Saints, Engcobo, with alternating praying and singing).

11 Work and Workers in the Mission Field (Oct. 1902), 40; FF (Feb. 1906), 240.

12 Manyano-Kopano, Foreword.

three decades earlier. This indigenous 'Home Missionary Movement' was in a sense the religious concomitant of that self-confident economic expansionism which had drawn leading Edendale Africans into land purchases in northern Natal from 1865; it was in this same area round Driefontein that revival started in 1874. By the 1890's, Unzondelelo was enthusiastically spreading the Gospel in Natal coastal districts and in Zululand. The movement was fuelled in the 1870's by complaints at missionary tardiness in creating an African ministry. However, although women did attend its large gatherings, when the African desire to evangelise the heathen themselves found expression in financial support for fifteen evangelists by 1906, these were by definition, because of prevailing Christian notions of ministry, male.[13] The prayer conventions can be interpreted in part, then, as a delayed echoing of this demand for greater missionary responsibility on the part of African women. Just as zealous African Methodist laymen and aspirant clergy sought new evangelistic opportunities from the 1870's, so laywomen and ministers' wives thirty years later held conferences and preached for converts. In this sense, prayer unions constituted an impulse towards greater autonomy which stopped short of a breakaway into independency, partly because women could not found churches themselves if they wished to replicate mission models, and also because their leadership was not thwarted, with the exception of Mrs. Gqosho's, in the fierce way the new African ministry of the 1890's was.

Mrs. Gqosho spread the Manyano in the Transvaal, it will be remembered, by holding revivals in different places and enlisting volunteers. The American Board Isililo was extended by similar female initiative in Natal. After the uproar at the 1912 Native Convention of the church, Mrs. Gobhozi

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13 J. Whiteside, History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa (London, 1906), 369-72, 399-404; Hewson, Introduction, 76-80.

and Mrs. Kaula held a meeting on their return to Ifafa. They then proceeded, with some men in the group, to Mahlongwa mission station, then to Umtwalume, where Rev. R. M. Ngcobo welcomed and helped them. The women from these three stations walked to three more, singing hymns and stopping for the night on the way as they covered the long distances, carrying 'their own provision of traditional food like beans and madumbi and a small tinware container to boil themselves some tea whenever they sat down to rest.... They were like vagrant wanderers because of this great gospel of Isililo.' After a request from the Umzinto churches, Rev. W. J. Makhanya of Durban convened a regional conference at the Beatrice Street church, so that those north of Durban could share 'this great idea...which had stirred the whole of the south'. An element in the Isililo's expansion likewise, then, was the female desire to emulate male itinerant preaching and church expansion. The lay movements for revival, temperance and purity established between 1895 and 1915 in the American Board church both expressed and facilitated an expansive advance which a missionary chronicler justifiably dubs its golden age.[14] The Isililo, incorporating all three of these concerns, was thus, among other things, a sign of spiritual vitality and self-confidence among African women. The time-lag may also represent a necessary delay before such travelling by groups of married women unaccompanied by their husbands could be accepted as respectable behaviour for Christian matrons.

Mature Christian matrons they were. It should be noted that the age group most conspicuous by its absence in women's manyanos was the newly married. Although many Western women's organisations are similarly

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14 Umlandu, 2-3. Christoferson, Adventuring, 92. ABM membership, which nearly quadrupled during those two decades, grew feebly over the next twenty years. The secession of Mvuyana in 1917 must not be forgotten. The figures were: 1895: 1,947, 1905: 4,179, 1915: 7,322, 1925: 7,838, 1935: 8,500.

dominated by those forty and over, who are freest of child-care duties, traditional treatment meted out especially to Nguni brides continued to influence Christian women's groups for decades. In the rural areas of the Cape particularly, the assumption was that 'A bride talks little and listens to the old women'. A bride was an outsider, bound by complicated linguistic avoidances, under the domestic tutelage of her mother-in-law, not free to go about to feasts for perhaps four years, and able to stop cooking in her mother-in-law's hut only on the latter's suggestion. The situation was less strained among the Sotho, where, in addition, because of the frequency of cross-cousin marriage, the bride was less often a total stranger and might even share some of her husband's ancestors. One repercussion of this Nguni characteristic was that the MU in the Transkei initially recruited only older women, grandmothers, because brides were almost their mother-in-law's servant and could not become members until they were free of her authority. This was still true in the 1930's, though one Transkeian woman joined most unusually within two months of marriage because her mother-in-law valued her former membership of the Methodist Girls' Committee. Generally the mother-in-law would determine, on the basis of a young bride's behaviour, whether she could be put forward: '"You can't go to the Women's Society when I go because you are still like this and this and this and this." She will say to you, "Improve yourself!"'[15] The woman over forty or past menopause was customarily regarded as ceremonially pure, in any case,

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15 Hunter, Reaction, 18, 36, 44; E. Preston-Whyte, 'Kinship and Marriage', in Hammond-Tooke, Peoples, 204-5; The Workers' Paper (Sept. 1928), 200, (June 1929), 128; Interview, Mrs. Mguli. P. Whooley, 'Marriage in Africa. A Study in the Ciskei', in T. D. Verryn (ed.), Church and Marriage in Modern Africa (Groenkloof, 1975), 259, asserts that in its tough initial testing under the mother-in-law, marriage is for girls the equivalent of initiation for boys.

and was then attaining her greatest moment of status through her adult sons; it was natural that this age group should dominate.

The domination of prayer movements by ministers' wives suggests that they provided an important outlet for a new status group. In the Transvaal, this group's expansion dates clearly to the time of the Methodist Manyano's establishment: the number of African ministers grew from seventeen in 1902 to thirty-five in 1908, and as they were invariably married, this signified the doubling of the number of 'ordained' wives in some five years. Despite the emphasis on lay leadership pre-eminent in Methodism, such women were excluded from congregational influence by and large, which made the opportunities offered by the Manyano even more valuable.

The rare reference made to individual women preachers of ability is always coupled with accounts of the male opposition they faced. When Mrs. Somngesi, who had organised the Primitive Methodist Prayer Union in the Orange Free State and Aliwal North, applied to come on the church plan as an Exhorter, some African males 'argued that if a woman was granted the privilege many more would want to come on because "You know what women are"'. They wanted instead to let her preach without her name appearing on the Plan. Through Mrs. Rosalina Kumalo's efforts, a Primitive Methodist church was erected at Consolidated Main Reef in 1921 for the evangelisation of 'raw' compound dwellers. Mrs. Kumalo visited there regularly with a band of fellow believers, exerting 'great influence' as a 'born orator' with 'exceptional energy'. After union with the Wesleyans, her compound church was dismantled and she was driven out of her Nancefield church 'because the new parson and others did not favour vigorous women orators who surpassed them in influence'. In similar vein, the Wesleyan Synod in 1920 stalled on the 'revolutionary proposal' to put women as local preachers on plan in Swaziland, even though the men alone could not fill all the openings, because the issue 'raised more questions than could be

answered'. Those black Methodist women, then, who aspired to become local preachers to Sunday congregations, were held back. Intensive training of the kind offered men for paid church posts was also denied them. What opportunities for women corresponded then to those of the vast army of laymen and ordained? The Transvaal Methodists in 1931 had 3,647 African local preachers, thirty-six evangelists and fifty-five ministers.[16] For women, the progression was circular: zeal found an outlet in the Manyano, and any further preaching ability developed as a result, was compulsorily redirected back into female channels.

The same combination of female potential, male opposition, and an absence of formal leadership instruction for women, is to be found in the American Board. In the 1890's, the American Zulu Mission paid a small amount annually - £10 at Inanda and £5 at Esidumbeni - for the services of two African Biblewomen. This did not mean their preaching to mixed congregations was acceptable. One of the subjects claiming 'most urgent discussion' (although the trend of argument is not indicated) at the Conference with African pastors in 1901 was 'Shall women be suffered to speak in the churches'. The likely answer to the question is indicated by the fact that a group of Pretoria ABM members, absorbed from the Zulu Congregational Church, had originally left the Free Methodist Church when the missionary would not acceed to their demand that he should stop letting his wife preach. Women continued to lack the theological training which, however elementary, was available for men

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16 MMS 1141, Aliwal North Quarterly Report, June 1917; PMMS, Annual Report (1927), 57; MMS 845, Kidwell to Ayre, 4 Dec. 1938; WMMS, Annual Report 1931, 72. White females had equal difficulty in winning acceptance. The country districts especially had 'an almost unconquerable prejudice against women preachers.' There was an excellent woman at Carolina in the 1920's but, Allcock reported, 'The people simply will not come when she is appointed.' MMS 842, Allcock to Burnet, 2 April 1924. See also WMMS, Annual Report 1920, 64.

and gave male preachers added authority. An ABM committee to consider a training school for Biblewomen met in 1913, the very year Deaconess Julia pleaded with Transvaal Anglicans for the training of Biblewomen; however, not until the 1940's for Nonconformist women, the 1950's for Anglican, did structured courses to equip black women for church work in South Africa begin, and then on an exceedingly small scale, at Lovedale Bible School and Tumelong Mission, Pretoria, respectively.[17]

The relative slowness of Anglican women to take prayer union initiatives in the first decade of this century must be related to the tardy advancement of African male church leadership. The first four deacons in the Transvaal were only ordained in 1904-5 after between ten and seventeen years each as catechists. There was only one priest by 1912, when three of the eleven deacons broke away in protest at their lack of independent responsibility.[18] Thus the potential pool of 'ordained' wives was much smaller than among the Methodists.

It was not only the difficulty women experienced in sharing in Sunday preaching which made them enthusiastic for the regular self-expression manyanos afforded. They also lacked by and large the domestic and political decision-making powers of the rural male adult. As one chief's councillor in Mafeking in the 1970's put it, 'I do most of my preaching in the chief's kgotla and at my own hearth.' Just as in traditional society, formal religious leadership, in both family and tribal ancestral veneration, is male, while the charismatic diviner is generally a woman, except among the Tswana and Pedi, so in the mission churches, the prayer women provided

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17 ABC: 15.4 v.21, 'Annual Meeting...1900', 28, 'Annual Meeting, 1901', 29; v.22, Report on the Johannesburg Work for the year ending June 1926; v.29, 'Annual Meeting July 1913', 'Semi-Annual Meeting December 1913', 11, 16; The Kingdom (Oct. 1913). For the training courses, see Lovedale Missionary Institution Report for 1955, 18, and H. Stanton, Go Well, Stay Well (London, 1961), 96-114.

18 C.R., 12 (1905) and 38 (1912), 4-5.

a less regulated counterpart to the formal authority of ordained ministers and paid evangelists. The women prophets and healers of the independent churches fill a similar role, and are just as unthreatening in any permanent sense on the whole to male dominance. The obligatory tribute to women as the 'backbone' of the church confirms the supportive, unobtrusive, female role. This is where Verryn's assertion, a propos the female ordination debate, of the relative naturalness of women's religious leadership to traditionalist males, misses the point. The diviner was an exceptional woman compelled by ineluctable supernatural spiritual call to perform religious rites in times of emergency; she remained outside the central authority structure of the traditional group, which was male. Similarly, the church was a women's movement and served to liberate them, as Sundkler asserts, mainly, I would add by way of modification, in its provision of opportunities for female spiritual initiatives among females. Thursday is the women's day like Sunday is the preacher's.[19]

The eagerness with which women embraced the chance to do their own evangelisation for a change is evident pre-eminently from Methodist accounts, which highlight the contrast with Brandel-Syrier's portrait from the 1950's of manyanos as closed societies representing 'the force of sheer survival', living 'in a world of make-believe', and strengthening their members through trouble-sharing to persevere. A Johannesburg Primitive Methodist woman describing revival services at Zastron in 1919, while meticulously recording the introductory texts and hymns of male

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19 Comaroff, 'Cosmology', 210; T. D. Verryn, The role of women in traditional African religion (Pretoria, 1972); B. G. M. Sundkler, Zulu Zion (London, 1976), 79; A. G. Schutte, Swart Doppers? (Pretoria, 1974), 109. Notions of female pollution also hindered females in traditional society. They could not participate freely in traditional religious rites until they became permanently 'clean' ceremonially after menopause. W. M. Eiselen and I. Schapera, 'Religious Beliefs and Practices' in I. Schapera (ed.), The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa (London, 1937), 259.

evangelists (here omitted), takes care to emphasise the effectiveness of the female preaching and counts heads as proof of success as enthusiastically as any Methodist male:[20]

> Mrs. Kumalo took the first chance, she sang Hymn No. 175 in Xosa, then Mrs. Tsiwo was asked to pray; after the prayer Mrs. Kumalo read from St. John the 3rd Chapter (about Christ teaching Nicodemus the necessity of regeneration). This became a very strong sermon. Mrs. Soni prayed, after her prayer Hymn No. 27 was sung in Xosa. Here 8 joined. It was now 12.00 p.m. Then the Evangelist was asked to take the Grace. On Sunday the 23rd...Mrs. Tsewo took the turn and read from St. Luke the 13 Chapter 24 verse; This sermon became a piercing sword to people. In this morning service six joined...In /the evening/ service nine people offered themselves as members of the Johannesburg Women Association. The biggest assembly we ever had was in the afternoon on Sunday at 3.00 p.m. There were 789 people; I hope we shall be successful...On the 24th, we took another Sermon...here many people were moved. 3 repented as new members, 7 joined. Total from Saturday evening to Monday evening we got 33.

As has already been indicated, Methodist Manyano conventions provided experience in mass evangelism for women members. In rural areas they confronted 'the heathen women of the kraals', including diviners, in a way white missionaries now seldom did. The 1915 gathering at Mahamba in Swaziland, for instance, spent two days preaching in the country. A band of some hundred women, led by Mrs. Cox and five African ministers' wives, and bearing a banner sent by the ladies of Nottingham (a fascinating cultural export!), went hymn singing to various kraals. Several women gave testimonies, they prayed with the people, and invited those three or four who 'cried for mercy' to the evening service. Subsequent conferences continued to win converts through open-air village services or the preaching of mission bands in urban location streets, but smaller initiatives were also taken,

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20 Brandel-Syrier, Black Woman, 28, 104; MMS 1180, File of Rev. A. A. Kidwell, unsigned letter 24 August 1919.

as when two Manyano women set off from Pretoria by donkey cart to preach and hold an all-night prayer meeting in a village twenty-five miles away. Individual women members might even use their new authoritativeness to confront erring males with the need for repentance, as happened in an emotional service in the Klerksdorp church, which ended with the aisles blocked by scores of people 'on their knees wrestling and crying'.[21]

That the Anglican WHS women did not display sufficient evangelistic zeal, was a criticism voiced by Deaconess Elsie Vigor, who encouraged them to share their faith rather than holding them back. One Lent, a few women went round to some of the yards with her. 'We visited room after room while the majority of the members stayed in church and prayed for us; on our return we prayed by name for those we had found.'[22] Probably her mode of evangelism, through pastoral visitation, lacked appeal. For all-night inter-denominational revival meetings, the WHS by contrast showed, in her opinion, excessive enthusiasm.

Finally, praying and preaching appealed to African women not only because they were keen to take their own evangelistic initiatives, but also because its emotional style corresponded with that already legitimated by traditional funeral custom. Revivalist preaching seeks to produce a kind of mourning in its hearers: they must bewail and confess their sins, then publicly commit themselves to a fresh start spiritually. Repentance and solemn pledges to lead a new life were a new element in African religious behaviour. However, the kind of emotional phenomena that revivalism sought to produce, while signifying repentance in one Christian tradition, also resembled routinized female Nguni funeral behaviour. The link was made

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21 FF (Feb. 1916), 132-3, (Oct. 1925), 24; MMS 1052, Mrs. Allcock to Miss Bradford, 4 Sept. 1922; FF (Feb. 1914), 163.

22 Report of Eighth General Missionary Conference (GMC) (Lovedale, 1932), 136-7.

most explicitly by the American Board women. The very name of their prayer union, Isililo, is the term used of the protracted ritual keening, wailing or lamentation of women after burial of the deceased. It is associated with the helplessness and submission expected of women at such a time of sorrow, while men traditionally ended mourning by an aggressive act of ritual hunting, a sign of their dominance. Thus Nguni attitudes to weeping suggest a further reason why revivalism, while appealing for instance to the members of E. E. Mahabane's dynamic Young Men's Manyano of the 1920's, could be more suitably entrenched in a women's movement. One is reminded of the way in which, in nineteenth century American Christianity, the characteristics of the new 'religion of the heart' were particularly congruent with the qualities esteemed in femininity. Other evidence confirms the link between women and mourning. Burial societies and insurance were 'the affairs of women', affirmed a Western Native Township woman in the 1940's, while Finnegan notes that throughout black Africa, wailing is regarded as typically female, and women are invariably the singers of stylized funeral laments.[23]

The persistance of weeping in these movements, as opposed to its initial acceptability, perhaps requires further psychological explanation. The tendency to hysterical crying at all-night interdenominational prayer meetings among Pondo women in the 1930's, Monica Hunter considered was aggravated because a 'natural emotional outlet in dancing' had been forbidden. But a Reef ABM woman told Brandel-Syrier they were weeping 'for their children, because of the trouble of their lives'. Descriptions

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23 Eiselen and Schapera, 'Religious Beliefs', 257; H. Ngubane, Body and Mind in Zulu Medicine (London, 1977), 84, 93-4; N. F. Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood. "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835 (New Haven, 1977), Ch. 4; H. Kuper and S. Kaplan, 'Voluntary Associations in an Urban Township', African Studies (AS), 3 (1944), 185; Finnegan, Oral Literature, 147-8.

of meetings in the 1950's stress the atmosphere of weeping, sighing and mutual loud commiseration when the women were speaking out their troubles as regards children, family, sickness and death, and the struggle for survival. The impression created is of a cathartic 'self-induced frenzy of unpremeditated talking'. Insufficient evidence about weekly meetings prior to 1940 makes it hard to gauge how widespread such a style of lamentation was; reports of conventions convey, rather, vigorous zeal and conscientious organisational up-building, though of course women wanted to be moved and inspired too.[24]

It is interesting that Brandel-Syrier considers that manyano emotionalism involves a 'certain artificiality...which verges on exhibitionism', a collectively-induced exaggeration of feeling, at odds with the normally very matter-of-fact African approach to religion. She attributes it to European influence, but possibly the connection should again be made with funeral norms instead. Such funereal wailing, Hammond-Tooke comments of the Bhaca,

> does not necessarily bear any relation to the real feelings of relatives and friends...some informants state that the weeping is spontaneous but the more usual explanation is: 'You must cry or people will think you have caused the death.'[25]

This could mean that, by a curious reversal of revivalist intention, for some Africans penitence was a proclamation of personal innocence rather than guilt, while sympathetic weeping cleared the weeper of any malicious contribution to the woes of the speaker. But this is largely speculation.

Traditional religious influence can also be discerned in the importance of music. In the Primitive Methodist account (note 20 above), the numbers of hymns were quoted as meticulously as Scripture references; Setiloane's

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24 M. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest (London, 1936), 374-5; Brandel-Syrier, Black Woman, 15, 34-9; Brandel, 'Needs', 181-2.

25 W. D. Hammond-Tooke, Bhaca Society (Cape Town, 1962), 228-9.

assertion that African Methodists would rather be without a Bible than a hymn book, gives Christian songs an even greater priority. Hymns in manyano groups provided each member with an individual charter and a personal application of God's power. An Anglican woman relates:

> Before you stand up and preach, you would sing your hymn, so that it is known that your hymn is page so and so. If you are sick, then we come to your home, singing your hymn...O yes, we have got our hymns with us, they are known.

Across the denominations, the vitality, stamping, clapping and swaying which often accompany hymns must have their roots in the importance of song and dance to African society, while the personalising of hymns recalls Sundkler's statement that 'Each diviner has her special song, with its particular lilt and rhythm'.[26]

The praying and preaching style of the manyanos came in for criticism from white church leaders on two main counts: first, it showed too little appreciation of restrained, silent prayer, and secondly, it was insufficiently practical. The Anglicans and the Americans were both vocal on these issues; the Methodists, by contrast, were encouraged by signs of the reappearance in the African church of the 'Pentecostal power' associated with Wesley's revival.

It was not only the women who favoured praying out loud, but the response they could expect was typified in Mrs. Laura Bridgman's comments after a prayer-and-fasting session by the boys at Amanzimtoti soon after the South African war:

> Silent prayer seems lightly esteemed by this people. They must pray loud and long, and often all together, or they cannot believe that their prayers are heard and accepted...we could but wish that they might pause and listen to the 'still small voice' to subdue and control what seemed to be a mere animal demonstration. Sometimes we fear their religion is all emotion.

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26 G. M. Setiloane, The Image of God among the Sotho-Tswana (Rotterdam, 1976), 156-7, 213;

/...cont. over

Francis Hill, CR, aptly contrasted African and European Anglican prayer as follows: 'They do it corporately and vocally, not as we do, individually and silently.' He and other Anglican missionaries, because of the religious tradition from which they came, understandably considered silent prayer superior, a sign of spiritual maturity; they attempted to teach it through Quiet Days and longer retreats which forbade speech in the interests of spiritual reflection and development. It must initially have seemed a very strange requirement to African women, but they valiantly endeavoured to comply. Nearly a hundred MU members, for instance, kept silence from Thursday afternoon to Sunday morning on a Retreat at Modderpoort, OFS, but their babies were not as successful.[27]

Having been 'rather shaken by the lively vocal sympathy of the company' on an earlier, similar occasion, Dorothy Maud attended an all-night prayer meeting at Sophiatown in 1929 for about two hundred women. Lasting from 9 p.m. to 4 a.m., it was preceded by a wonderful feast for which a sheep was slaughtered, and was followed by the Eucharist; this fusing of traditional and Christian holy meals aptly recalls the dual influence being brought to bear on the nature of the occasion sandwiched between. Before the service, the Archdeacon reminded the women that 'God hears prayer even when one prays softly.' This availed little. To Maud as to Hill, the whole African approach to prayer was foreign, though she tried to be broad-minded:

> ...it was very interesting. The only trouble was that there was hardly a silence all through the night. One after another they rose and swept forward to prophesy, every word being interpreted among

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Interview, Mrs. Mguli; Sundkler, Prophets, 22.

27 Missionary Herald (May 1903), 203; Cape to Zambezi (May 1937), 27; USPG, E, Diocese of Bloemfontein, H. H. Firkins, 1925. A conference in the Northern Transvaal in 1920 compromised by drawing on both white and black favoured styles in a quiet half-day of silence and in the afternoon a devotional meeting where women would 'pray of course extempore and give little addresses'. USPG, CWW, A. Snow to Miss Saunders, 11 May 1920.

> themselves into three different languages. We did have quite a lot of extempore prayer, but no silence. However, the great thing is that they should run these things themselves, and gradually they will come along to see the power of silence.[28]

White Anglicans were particularly wary of excessive emotion in black believers. Missionary fears mingled ambivalently with pleasure at African participation. When Dora Earthy started a WHS branch among some Xhosa Christians at Middlebult in 1912, she found herself obliged to conduct an all-night service (from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m., with a short break at one in the morning for 'tea, bread, and meat-bones'). She was evidently relieved when the ten Boksburg members who had come too, 'really spoke very nicely and sensibly...I am thankful to say there was no "emotionalism" at all. All the service was quiet and restrained.' The impropriety of the hour most favoured for prayer also perturbed women missionaries. As one wrote in 1920, WHS zeal needed 'guiding on the right lines', because though

> one hesitates to quench and discourage their eagerness to pray...yet it is so much mixed up with a sort of excitement, and it is so bad for women, mostly mothers of families, to get into the habit of being out all night.

Deaconess Vigor showed the same uneasiness, coupled with scepticism about the depth or effectiveness of African women's prayer:

> They <u>love</u> having all night prayer meetings, in their present stage we realise it is quite impossible for them to pray all through the night, they do not understand that sort of prayer but they preach and exhort one another to pray in an emotional kind of way which is very unhealthy, on the other hand the Native clergy tell us there have been remarkable answers to their prayers.../<u>some</u>/ one who knows a good deal about psychology told us that at night the will is at its weakest and the emotions more easily stirred so it seems it would be good for them to have these prayer meetings in the early morning.

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28 Ashley, <u>Peace-Making</u>, 25; <u>Litaba tsa Kereke</u> (Sept. 1929), 3; Ekutuleni Papers, Maud newsletter, 17 Sept. 1929.

There was in fact a sharp division of opinion among the black clergy as to whether these meetings should be blessed or banned, and in Natal a decade later such meetings gave rise to slanders and scandal, no doubt partly due to the unwillingness of some husbands to credit their wives with innocent motives for staying out overnight.[29]

Despite the white missionary refrain about the Methodist Manyano - 'The possibilities are great, but the need for effective and appropriate guidance is also great' - the response to the uninhibited spiritual style of the movement was invariably enthusiastic, or at least tranquil in the knowledge that Methodism had a history of such emotionalism. Mrs. Cox described the closing Communion of the 1920 convention as 'a wonderful service; great waves of spiritual influence sweeping over the congregation until the house is filled with Pentecostal power'. Mrs. Allcock, while joining in 'the fervent "A-a-a-mens" at an evangelistic meeting in a Swazi kraal, distanced herself sufficiently to observe:

> The Bantu people are very emotional. They work themselves up into an almost hysterical state. It reminded one of the description of revival meetings in Wesley's day. The red-bloused women all prayed aloud and together, the heathen women rocked and moaned, the babies cried and the little boys peeped through their mothers' blankets to see what this strange sight meant. [After half an hour, she suggested they explain the plan of salvation individually to the women, then 'after another half hour of wailing', the leader asked for a show of hands from converts]...it is wonderful how this type of revival service suits the temperament of this wild people.

While welcoming or acquiescing in such emotionalism far more than Anglicans or the Congregationalist Americans, the Methodist missionaries still cast

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29 USPG, CWW, Earthy to Miss Gurney, 13 April 1912; E, 'Work Amongst the Native Women in Johannesburg and the Reef', 1920; CWW, Vigor to Saunders, 15 Feb. 1923;E, O.Victor, 1922; SWM Journal (April 1936), 8.

the white Manyano president in the role of policeman at conventions, keeping order. Hence the self-congratulatory comment that the devolution of responsibility was justifying itself, in that the 1941 convention, despite its black president, had 'a wonderful spontaneity, with no loss of order in the conduct of the meetings'.[30]

Whereas emotionalism was particularly an Anglican bogy, Manyano lack of practicality most conflicted with American religious norms and the activism which distinguished women's church and philanthropic groups in the United States at that time. The Anglicans stressed that WHS members must do some regular task for the church, while the Methodist Manyano was the Prayer 'and Service' Union by the 1930's, but only the American women missionaries actually tried to get rid of the name African women had chosen, with its specific associations with mourning and repentance. They called a meeting with the black women to suggest that the title 'Isililo' was unsuitable, and should be changed to , characteristically enough, 'Women's Welfare Group of the American Board'. This the 'old women firmly opposed', saying, 'We love our name'. As the jubilee pamphlet triumphantly notes, 'Indeed it is unchanged and appears as such in the Title Deeds'. Mrs. Cowles in 1926 expanded her 1918 criticisms in this respect as follows:

> The Isililo organization needs to learn to do <u>definite</u> things. They are strong on praying and on holding Revival meetings etc and they are a self-disciplinary body, holding each other up to time, but they have not yet got down to business and taken <u>definite</u> steps for bettering their home condition. That is what we white missionary ladies are urging them to do. They will learn some day! But the negro is naturally emotional, and meetings and concerts are his natural bent. Getting down to definite <u>points</u> is hard for the women especially.

One woman who joined the Isililo in Orlando in 1937 and later emulated the American missionaries' social work by starting a youth club in the

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30 <u>FF</u> (April 1913), 251, (Sept. 1921), 233; Allcock Papers, Mrs. Allcock to her family, 15 Oct. 1924 (Mrs. Allcock's father had edited Wesley's /cont. over...

1950's, said disapprovingly on looking back, 'Those days we had nothing, absolutely nothing in particular - sing and preach and pray, that's all. But now we are beginning to have projects...Christianity without works is like dead, that's what it is.' Though it seemed alright at the time, forty years later she considered the spiritual emphasis was inadequate as it failed to help the many in need - the old, the blind, cripples, and children. A criticism of manyano impracticality in effecting real social change was also stirring as early as the 1920's and 1930's, among young women like Lilian Ngoyi, later president of the Federation of South African Women. Observing churchwomen weeping at Easter time over Christ's suffering, she 'felt there was something very wrong, for after weeping nothing would be done. They all waited for some power from God.'[31]

Those religious activities emphasised by manyanos in the early decades of this century, were equally favoured by African Christians generally, of whom D. D. T. Jabavu said in 1932:

> Unlike Whites, they are not given to speculation on abstract church dogma but devoted to the simplicities of religion; prayer meetings, hymn-singing, assimilation of Scripture texts and the constant calling of others unto repentance.

That this continued to be true well into the 1960's is suggested from other

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Journal, so the comparison was not uninformed); TM (June 1941), 6.

31 Umlandu, 4-5; ABC: 15.4 v.48, Amy Cowles to Miss Lamson, 22 April 1926; Interview, Mrs. Mavimbela; H. Joseph, If This Be Treason (London, 1963), 165. Methodist protest about liquor laws (see section c)) was a rare example of the recorded intrusion of national issues into manyano conventions. In the early 1940's, the National Council of African Women tried to get the Johannesburg Mothers' Union African Branch to affiliate. Though Miss Beale personally thought it 'an excellent thing for the mothers to take an active interest in social matters as well as in prayer meetings and family life, and realise how much one is bound up with another', none of her five African Advisory Council members seemed to know about the NCAW, though one belonged to the Daughters of Africa. WUL, Rheinallt Jones Collection, Agnes Beale to Mrs. Jones, 28 March 1942.

sources. Brandel concluded that worship and prayer were what Christianity meant to African women, while Pauw noted the enthusiastic acceptance by African Christians of God's nearness and his concern with the personal circumstances of believers, who may approach him directly and personally in prayer. This whole stress on worship as an end in itself, on religion as personal but shared experience, has partly to do with the nature of the Christianity which really established itself in that period of expansion and African initiative between 1880 and 1920. This was a time when African education was not very far advanced either, which further discouraged intellectual and theological complexity. The Christianity of American and British revivalism was pietistic and fervent, concerned about individual salvation and continuing trust in and commitment to God. It contrasted strongly with the activist social gospel exemplified in an American missionary like Ray Phillips. Because of its congruence with, as I have suggested, behaviour patterns deemed appropriate to women, and its easier adoption by groups not hampered by the formal restrictions of a church service, this revivalistic Christianity found a permanent home in women's manyanos. Pauw indeed comments that it is in the manyanos

> that the predominant trends in Xhosa churches find their fullest expression: emotionalism, other-worldly orientation, emphasis on prayer, and having a direct relationship with God as caring Father, who gives strength to bear the burdens of this world.[32]

African women themselves have stressed one further reason for the importance of prayer to manyanos (and this provides a bridge to the next section) - namely, the woman's maternal role:

> It's because all the difficulties of the home faced women. The man is out at work...and if for instance

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32 D. D. T. Jabavu, 'The Fruits of Christianity among the Bantu', Eighth GMC, 112-3; Brandel, 'Needs', 162; B. A. Pauw, 'The Influence of Christianity' in W. D. Hammond-Tooke, The Bantu-Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa (London, 1974), 432; Pauw, Christianity, 94.

> something happens to her child, who feels pain?
> The mother. Why? The mother had carried this
> child close, close to her heart for nine months,
> that's why she feels pain.

Because women feel more pain, one manyano woman suggested, they have more sympathy for one another; sharing their troubles, another testified, enabled them to see their own difficulties in perspective, for someone else's might be even more burdensome. But the therapy does not come purely from the group: 'It's through prayer that you have a chance to speak to God', and if you pray insistently, strongly, knowing God is going to answer, he will. Simply talking to God, though he is unseen, makes you feel 'relieved' and 'released' from your difficulties; this was the way a seasoned member accounted for the greater importance of prayer to women than to men.[33]

b) The Family Focus: Controlling Adolescent Daughters

The Christianity of nineteenth and early twentieth century missionaries embraced convictions about courtship, marriage, and the role of the mother in the family which ran counter to the key assumptions of African, particularly Nguni, society. The manyano and the Isililo should be seen at least in part, the evidence suggests, as the attempt by African women converts to internalize these new norms or perhaps lament the difficulty of doing so under the destructive influence of South Africa's industrial revolution. The demands of both God and gold removed key supports from the married woman, while pressuring her to assume new responsibilities.

As Adrian Hastings notes, 'absolute monogamy, absolute indissolubility, and the celebration of marriage by Christians in a form recognized by the Church' became virtually inflexible requirements among Western Christians

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33 Interviews, Mrs. Mavimbela, Mrs. Mguli.

themselves only well after the Reformation.[34] Yet it was these norms which clashed with polygynous African marriage. However, not only is polygyny 'above all a problem relating to conversion';[35] it is also obviously a male 'temptation' rather than a female. For African Christian mothers, isolated in a smaller monogamous household, and especially deprived in town of relatives as neighbours, it was the obligation to guard their daughters' virginity that proved particularly difficult to fulfil.

The home was the centre of Southern Bantu traditional religion, with the father as 'priest' interceding with the ancestors.[36] Mission Christianity, though using extra-domestic buildings for public worship, similarly nurtured family religion, but gave to the mother a spiritual role equal with if not greater than the father's. This reflected social and economic developments in the missionaries' home countries. In industrializing England and the United States from the beginning of the nineteenth century, for middle-class women segregated at home with their children, their domestic manufacturing diminishing, their husbands and older children drawn into non-agricultural jobs away from the household, 'motherhood stood out as a discrete task'. Religious and educational ideology confirmed the importance of women's domestic influence in the spheres of family spirituality and child nurture.[37] The persistence of this ideology into the twentieth century can be illustrated in a Methodist missionary's rhetoric:

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34 A. Hastings, Christian Marriage in Africa (London, 1973), 5-6 and passim. for examples of how these 'absolutes' were for centuries not rigidly applied.

35 Ibid., 18.

36 See Shropshire, Church, 355-7. Perhaps this is an over-simplification; the lineage was the cult group and the genealogically senior male, priest.

37 Cott, Bonds, 84, 46-7, 62-70.

> Do we ever try to imagine what our England would be without its home life, that most treasured of our nation's possessions? The home where the mother is enthroned as queen, where peace and concord dwells, and where love, emanating from the hearts of Godly parents, holds impartial sway!

Johannesburg women missionaries would not have quarrelled with the sexual division of labour endorsed by one of their number, Mrs. Clara Bridgman, who described approvingly those thoughtful young African couples in the 1920's 'founding comfortable and happy homes where the man earns the money and his wife keeps the home and really tries to bring up the children.' As if to confirm its ideological exportation, there survives a suitable exposition of this doctrine of maternal responsibility by a second-generation black South African Christian woman educated in the United States:

> The woman, the wife, is the keystone of the household: she holds a position of supreme importance, for is she not directly and intimately concerned with the nurturing and upbringing of the children of the family, the future generation? She is their first counsellor, and teacher; on her rests the responsibility of implanting in the flexible minds of her young, the right principles and teachings of modern civilisation. Indeed, on her rests the failure or success of her children when they go out into life. It is therefore essential that the home atmosphere be right, that the mother be the real 'queen' of the home, the inspiration of her family.[38]

Missionaries of this era further assumed that it was the mother's duty to tell her daughter 'the facts of life' and appropriately mould her attitudes towards sex. As one wrote:

> Even in the earliest days of a girl's life the mother should find a way so to inculcate those attitudes of self-respect and regard for womanly purity, of reserve and modesty, of dignity, of appreciation of the position of wife and mother, that these things will consciously or unconsciously influence every later act.[39]

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38 Advance (April 1916), 56; ABC: 15.4 v.39, no. 131, 'The Place of Women in the Church on the Mission Field'; C. Maxeke, 'Social Conditions Among Bantu Women and Girls', in Students' Christian Association of South Africa, Christian Students and Modern South Africa (Alice, 1930), 311.

39 R. E. Phillips, African Youth and Sexual Hygiene (Durban, 1935), 43.

Now in African traditional society, although training children was primarily the parents' duty and in early childhood more directly the mother's, relatives shared these responsibilities more than was usual in nineteenth century English or American nuclear families. Furthermore, the peer group in whose company a child learnt and performed its economic tasks, had a key role in its sexual instruction, as did the community at large in initiation; an adolescent refrained, on grounds of respect, from speaking about sex in the presence of her mother but felt less restraint with her grandmother.[40] In this important aspect of socialization, then, mothers were not customarily expected to be the sole or even primary teacher. Though African society did not share middle class Victorian verbal reticence about sex - there was a matter-of-fact acceptance of marriage as 'an essential step for every normal person to take' and a familiarity with the nature of sexual intercourse from an early age - the most explicit sex education did not come from a girl's mother. Female initiation schools among the Lobedu, Venda, Pedi, Southern Sotho and Tswana gave instruction on women's rights and duties, and etiquette in marriage, while the sexual frankness of Zulu girls' coming-of-age songs would have been considered obscene out of context. This adolescent group instruction, given 'under unusual and dramatic circumstances', was meant to uphold traditional marriage ideals, not promote sexual licence; initiates had to be virgins.[41]

Like the Victorians, African traditionalists condemned premarital pregnancy; they fined the lover and subjected the girl to public disgrace.

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40 I. Schapera, Married Life in an African Tribe (London, 1940), 244-7; A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde (eds.), African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (London, 1950), 28.

41 Schapera, Married Life, 38; A. Van der Vliet, 'Growing Up in Traditional Society', in Hammond-Tooke, Peoples, 227-37.

Aspects of her dress marked her out and her peer group mocked her at night in obscene songs.[42] However, though pregnancy was deprecated, Nguni society, unlike the Sotho-Tswana peoples, practised an approved form of pre-marital sexual intimacy, intracrural intercourse, which conflicted with Victorian notions of pre-marital chastity. The Nguni form of courtship was more than tolerated - it was socially desirable. The Nguni take the view, 'It is bad to break the rules [i.e. by making a girl pregnant], but it is also bad not to play at all.' Among the Zulu, a group of older girls would control the younger girls, granting permission first to talk to sweethearts, then for external intercourse between the betrothed. Among the Southern Nguni, adolescent night-time song and dance gatherings would end in couples pairing off to sleep together in this way. A daughter might be given a special hut a little apart from the others in which to meet her lover, who paid a 'fine', perhaps a beast, to become 'accredited'. More gifts might be demanded from him subsequently, for 'men regard their daughters as banks', Bhaca informants told Hammond-Tooke.[43]

It was these two issues - lovers' 'fines' and parentally-condoned private lovemaking - which sparked off the spiritual upsurge among ABM women that resulted in the formation of the Isililo at the Native Annual Meeting of the Church at Groutville in mid-1912.

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42 I. Schapera, 'Premarital Pregnancy and Native Opinion. A Note on Social Change', Africa, VI (1933) 65-6. This article records how widespread Tswana premarital pregnancy had become by the end of the 1920's. See also E. J. Krige, 'Changing Conditions in Marital Relations and Parental Duties among Urbanized Natives', Africa, IX, 1 (1936), for illegitimacy in Pretoria locations in the early 1930's.

43 P. and I. Mayer, 'Socialization by Peers. The Youth Organization of the Red Xhosa' in P. Mayer (ed.), Socialization: the Approach from Social Anthropology (London, 1970), 175; E. J. Krige, The Social System of the Zulus (Pietermaritzburg, 1936), 104-6; Hammond-Tooke, Bhaca Society, 95, also 92-6.

> As a result of very powerful sermons preached here, many people were moved to tears over the matter of low morals among the youth during those days. Young girls were getting pregnant before marriage whilst living at their parents' homes.
>
> The male members complained that it was the women who were giving the youth opportunities for immoral behaviour, accepting gladly and without reproach, gifts from their boys' and girls' lovers and also helping to entertain their daughters' lovers in their homes and giving them opportunities for privacy. Then there followed a great spiritual uproar, as at Pentecost, where women who were present confessed their own sins and failures in this matter.

When the movement spread, it was on the new Christian basis that mothers were responsible for their children's immorality: one meeting took the text, 'You shall perish with your children'.[44] So the Isililo is to be interpreted in part as an attempt by African women to take responsibility as seniors for Christian girls, and establish effective communal Christian sanctions against premarital pregnancy at a time when adequate supervision of relationships and punishment of unchastity by the age-set or older girls, persisted only among 'pagans'.

Concern over premarital pregnancy among Christian girls surfaced in other churches at the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century too. There were a whole range of circumstances conspiring to produce this phenomenon at this particular time. Because puberty rituals were outlawed by horrified missionaries, the explicit advice given to initiates on how to avoid conception through sex-play became increasingly less accessible to girls from Christian homes, precisely at a time when other influences combined to make premarital sexual experience easier to acquire. Missionaries from the late nineteenth century onwards, expecially in Natal, encouraged female self-assertion against parental authority by sheltering runaway brides, and obtained legislative backing for the right

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44 Umlandu, 2.

of women over eighteen to choose their own marriage partner. Mission education further eroded parental domination - children who knew more than their parents became defiant, and parents tended to abdicate their religious responsibilities to the school. It also gave adolescents the chance to meet away from home observation in a co-educational environment. Schools also, curiously, exerted less peer group pressure. Western Christian individualism weakened group solidarity, while missionary scrutiny and Western norms of romantic love gave school love affairs a 'privateness' which, because of its contrast with 'the publicity and control in the Red youth groups', was even more likely in Mayer's view to lead to pregnancy than was ignorance of 'safe' external intercourse. Enforced labour migrancy by young men delayed marriage for rural girls, who then also had to compete in a glutted market. The old ways of compensating for premarital pregnancy were also becoming less effective: holding young men responsible for their illegitimate children proved much more difficult in town as well as in rural areas from which men had a chance to escape to town. The absence of fathers left discipline to mothers, customarily expected to be more indulgent. It is striking that one of the key ABM mission stations reported, the same year as the Isililo was founded, what a 'very serious question' efficient mission administration presented because of the 'new feature in all our churches - the very few men who are at home'.[45]

In accounting for the lapses of which the men accused the women at the 1912 ABM Conference, a possible line of argument seems to be that Christian mothers, standing in for paternal authority, feared by harshness

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45 Mayer, 'Socialization', 178; A. Vilakazi, Zulu Transformations (Pietermaritzburg, 1962), 47, 57-8, also blames Christian secrecy for pregnancies; ABC: 15.4 v.29, Annual Report 1912 Adams and Imfume Stations, 2. Note, however, that women outnumbered men for the first time on the church rolls in 1899. Christoferson, Adventuring, 126.

to drive their unmarried daughters away to town, where it was becoming obvious they could earn their own living. Perhaps women were, like Bhaca fathers of the 1950's, 'regarding their daughters as banks', and welcomed lovers' gifts at a time of financial stringency; as the Mission forbade lobola, gifts may have provided an acceptable substitute. The fact that the men berated the women is noteworthy; fathers may have been worried at the 'spoiling' of daughters under lax maternal control during their absence at labour centres, and the consequent loss of the lobola which a virgin could bring. The subsequent African account gives no hint of these sorts of factors, but it seems unlikely that the response engendered owed its power entirely to notions of pre-marital chastity and maternal responsibility propagated by the missionaries; the 'sin' the women confessed, so clearly came out of traditional norms.

Although 'purity', or premarital chastity, was a perennial concern among ABM women in Johannesburg, the question did not arise organically, as in Natal, out of the anxieties of an elite rural Christian community, nor did it provide the stimulus for prayer union formation. It appears to have been left, too, to missionaries or the wives of church officials to handle, according to an inter-war report of the Mission:

> At the Annual Meeting of the Isililo...talks on the training of the children, young people in the home and definite Purity talks are given by the women missionaries. Mrs. Bridgman gives periodical purity talks to the older boys and girls of the Johannesburg day schools, taking them separately. Some of the Pastors' wives and wives of Deacons have private talks with girls in the Enquirer's classes. One Deacon's wife in Johannesburg gave a fearless talk recently to her class of young women on relations with men.[46]

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46 'The Place of Women', 3.

The Isililo considered that 'White weddings took place frequently' as a result of their work; couples who succeeded in staying pure were given presents by the organization, which were displayed on a table in the church on the wedding day by way of tribute. Young women were also enrolled by the Isililo and intially wore white ribbons for purity; from the 1940's, they wore pink collars instead.[47] But despite the obvious centrality of the issue of their daughters' sexual behaviour to the formation of the Isililo, the evidence suggests that, once established, the organization developed an interest in revivals and gatherings for their own sake, rather than to reform attitudes to premarital chastity.

There is no indication that concern about Christian premarital pregnancy played any part in the founding of the Methodist Manyano in the Transvaal. Discussion about children at the 1912 Manyano convention, however, focused 'especially on the care of girls, who so often fall into evil ways'. 1912, it should be remembered, was the year the Isililo was founded in Natal. It is very striking how church synods and committees, the General Missionary Conference and African church members were all showing a heightened interest in the topic of black female adolescent sexual behaviour in the period 1911-12, which is when hostel advocacy was building up support too, and the 'black peril' scare was reaching a new peak. It was clearly a crucial time as regards the urbanization of young African women and their increasing assertion of independence in the rural areas as well. Like the ABM, the

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47 Umlandu, 10. Women of other churches besides the three of this study took on this supervisory role over girls' sexuality. Hunter, Reaction, 184, noted that two representatives of the Women's Association of the Bantu Presbyterian Church had to certify that a girl was a virgin before she could be married in church with a veil. Hunter claimed, incidentally, that Christian premarital pregnancy was not more frequent than that among pagans in the same district.

Methodists set up a junior section of the prayer union for these unmarried girls and young women; the Young Women's Manyano was started at some stage in the second decade of this century by Mrs. Elizabeth Kumalo, Manyano Vice-President, with the help of Mrs. Burnet. They drew up some simple rules which were mostly, Mrs. Allcock explained, 'directed towards the moral life of members and intended to strengthen them along the path of their greatest danger', which was of course seen in terms of threats to their virginity. The 'unwonted freedom' of coming to town to work, Mrs. Allcock went on, in the familiar vein of white hostel supporters, was 'fraught with much peril to the native girl' who had 'learnt no control of herself'. She admitted that the rules were so 'binding' and restrictive that at first not many girls were found who would conscientiously try to keep them. The movement was able to capitalise, though,on that new, earnest self-confidence general among young educated mission Africans after World War I: in 1920, a year after Natal ABM youth founded the Purity League, there was a special young women's session at the Manyano convention, since some thirty young educated women, day school teachers or fresh from the teacher training course at Kilnerton, wished to speak. The young women continued to contribute at conventions, their powerful testimonies being especially noted in 1934, for instance. Mrs. Allcock promoted the Young Women's Manyano vigorously - seventeen new branches were started in 1924 alone - but recorded 'the hard struggle the young women have to keep true to the rules of the Young Women's Manyano'; membership nevertheless increased 'despite many lapses'.[48]

Already in the Transkei by the turn of the century, Christian Methodist

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48 FF (April 1913), 253; Allcock Papers, 'Girls of South Africa'; FF, (Sept. 1921), 233; TM (Dec. 1934), 7; WMDT (1925-6), 43, (1928-9), 30.

young people, 'giving increased trouble by the vice and follies they run after with greediness', had evolved a substitute for the courting parties denied them, namely 'night tea-parties under the pretence of helping Church Funds'.[49] The explicit connection of the Young Women's Manyano with resistance to such traditional initiation and courtship practices was underlined in the Union's aims as originally set out:

> To abstain from all youthful lusts, remembering that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. To take no part in unbecoming songs, nor spend the night at wedding feasts unless prayer be conducted there by the Association. To avoid the company of the wicked and all unprofitable social gatherings. To resist sin under all circumstances and not to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever or one of questionable character. To avoid superstitions and idolatrous practices and belief.

However, the draft constitution reported to Synod in 1940 was more restrained:

> 1. To encourage members to read the Scriptures every day and to keep their bodies and habits pure as Temples of the Holy Spirit.
> 2. To honour parents as becomes a Christian.
> 3. To keep the home clean and tidy.
> 4. To visit the sick, pray for and speak the word to those who are not Christians.
> 5. To promote the Missionary spirit and help in Church efforts.

That mothers were supposed to help daughters to shun the customary lovemaking, was emphasised in the constitution adopted for the Manyano throughout South Africa in 1933, when the Transvaal joined with the movement in the rest of the country. One provision stressed that '"Night-singing" (Imbolora) and dancing by young people are forbidden'.[50]

The Young Women's Prayer Union remained a relatively small movement (Table 18), and is meagrely documented. For rural members in Swaziland, we know that a number were the daughters of heathen parents and faced opposition

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49 Rev. Hargreaves' Diary, 17 Jan. 1900, quoted in Mills, 'African Clergy', 75.

50 Transvaal Methodist Synod 1940, Report of the Women's Manyano; Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa...1933

/...cont. over

to their Christian stand, frequently having to resist arranged marriages with heathen husbands. Of the urban members on the Reef, little is recorded, but membership figures tell their own tale (Table 19). Whereas adult female membership on the Reef remained a constant 27 per cent of total Transvaal Manyano membership between 1933 and 1940, the Young Women's percentage plummeted from nearly 27 per cent to just under 17 in the same period. The movement was geared to help girls resist traditional premarital party-going; in town, the opportunities and distractions took a different form, in the face of which the Young Women's Manyano proved even more ineffectual and unable to attract members. In the 1930's, commercially-run dances, African shebeens and the independence of employment conspired to offer young unmarried black women enjoyment and freedom; there was little in town which could by way of counter-incentive make it seem worthwhile or sensible to guard one's virginity interminably. Dikobe's novel, The Marabi Dance, set in Johannesburg in 1938, its heroine an unmarried mother, captures the situation perfectly. When a contemporary survey found a third of girls over sixteen in some 350 Johannesburg African families had had illegitimate babies, marabi dances were blamed.[51]

In the case of the Anglicans, the initial impetus to tackle the pre-marital pregnancy of African Christian girls derived from the women missionaries' familiarity with the extensive, somewhat punitive, religious and charitable work among unmarried mothers in England. With time, instead of instructing only the girls involved, the missionaries stressed the mother's responsibilities. Women's Help Society members, like other black Christian women, lamented their powerlessness and lack of influence with

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(Cape Town, 1933), 259.

51 E. Hellmann, Problems of Urban Bantu Youth (Johannesburg, 1940), 16, 51.

their daughters and asked for assistance in fulfilling this onerous new duty. Part of the problem, undoubtedly, was the inability of African women to devote themselves full-time to childrearing - poverty made that domestic ideal impracticable.

At first, in line with the double standard so long entrenched in Western Europe, the main approach to female sexual purity was negative and retributive. Penitents' classes for girls under Christian discipline for premarital pregnancy were started in Johannesburg in 1911 - again, a significant date - to test 'whether they really understand what they have done' and effect a year's disciplinary probation until the priest thought they were fit to be restored and their babies baptised. Of forty voluntary members in 1912, only two 'fell back into sin' soon after joining, so classes perhaps served as a substitute preventive sanction for some. The church also evolved visible punishments, again falling on the female offender, but not dissimilar in kind to those current in traditional morality. In a number of Anglican mission districts in South Africa by 1913, African Christian girls who had had an illegitimate child were not allowed to wear a white dress, veil or wreath on marriage and the ceremony had to be performed outside the church door or in the church porch.[52]

More positive efforts were made late in the second decade. Amy Kent started branches of the WHS for young girls all over the Reef in 1917, to counteract what she saw as growing immorality and the feeble Christian preparation provided by black catechists; thus the adolescents were linked for the first time with the mothers' organisation. All but one of these branches collapsed within two years, however, for lack of visits. Perhaps

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52 USPG, WW Letters Africa, Williams to Miss Trollope, 10 April 1911; CWW, Williams to Miss Saunders, 15 Dec. 1912; CPSA, fAB 226, Short Report of the First Conference of Women Missionaries of the Church of the Province of South Africa.

these staffing difficulties reinforced the missionary desire to devolve more responsibility on black mothers. Already in 1911 one missionary had voiced the encouraging opinion that the moral standards of Reef African Christian women were rising:

> that a moral downfall is no longer looked upon as an almost inevitable incident, that there is a growing responsibility of the elder women for the younger and a desire of the mothers to see their daughters, not only better educated and more 'advanced' in the matter of hats and boots (that much desired mark of civilisation) but purer and more womanly than themselves.

The special subject at the WHS conference in 1919, attended by fifty church women, was 'Our girls, how to train and teach them when young'. Though women from the country congregations on Reef farms particularly faced the problem of daughters running away from home to town and were 'earnestly desiring help', it was still, a woman missionary reported, 'quite a new idea to some of our more ignorant women' that they could by home teaching and influence help their girls later to be strong in facing temptation. (The unspoken assumption always was that the predominant temptation was sexual). They had just learnt Christian ways themselves, they said; how could they teach others?[53] Probably their instinctive reticence at taking on the unaccustomed role of sex educators fed into this reaction too.

In 1929 at the women's conference in Sophiatown, the topic surfaced again. 'One and all who got up to talk about prayer, spoke about girls.' As a result, on the prompting of the mothers, Dorothy Maud started a guild for the girls, uniformed like their mothers, but in white veils with their white tops and black skirts, and meeting on Friday afternoons. Maud reported the women 'in despair' about their daughters, 'saying that they pay not the slightest attention to them: simply going their own way, and getting into trouble right and left'. A decade later, St. Mary's Guild

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53 USPG, E, A. M. Kent, 1917-19; MF (Nov. 1911), 349; USPG, E, 'Work Amongst the Native Women...', 1920; The Kingdom (March 1920).

was established further afield, for example in Orlando; its inability to guarantee premarital chastity amid Reef social conditions is confirmed by the 1946 Mothers' Union conference discussion of the eligibility of girls who had 'fallen by the way to become or remain members of St. Mary's Guild'. The original disciplinary approach was retained, though, along with these guilds. Miss Happer at Buxton Street confessed in 1927 that she found her penitents 'a great problem and a great mystery' and could only appeal to the girls to be good mothers 'for the sake of these sweet scraps of humanity'.[54] When additional centres of female missionary activity were started in Sophiatown and Orlando, penitents' classes formed part of the routine church work, but continued to be led by spinsters.

To sum up: while the resolve to prevent their daughters' premarital pregnancy sparked off the establishment of only the rural Natal ABM Isililo, other women's prayer unions shared the desire to assume responsibility, however despairingly, as Christian mothers for the sexual purity of unmarried girls. In all three missions, this impulse led to the creation of a special association for such girls under the protective aegis of the older women's organisation, with which the link appears to have been closest in the Methodist case.[55]

Although their untraditional, Christian accountability for their daughters' sexual morality provides the most prominent instance, other features, old and new, of women's role in the home fed into manyano appeal. While African women in South Africa traditionally lacked the formal women's groups so prominent in West Africa, their lives shared three of the four

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54 Litaba tsa Kereke (Sept. 1929), 3; Maud newsletter, 17 Sept. 1929; The Watchman (Feb. 1946), 6; USPG, E, C. Happer, 1927.

55 For a fuller discussion of this topic, see D. Gaitskell, 'Wailing for Purity: Prayer Unions, African Mothers and Adolescent Daughters 1912-1940', to be published in a book ed. by S. Marks and R. Rathbone.

features which a recent study suggests set the stage for the formation of such women's associations - virilocality, patrilineality and polygyny - the crucial economic independence based on a marketing and trading complex being absent.[56] Even when Southern African women converted to Christianity, and were therefore beyond polygyny, two predisposing factors to women's solidarity remained: the separation from their kin which all women underwent in marriage, coupled with incorporation as strangers into a kin group with no outside loyalties such as matrilineality entails. The separation of women from men in daily life and activities was particularly strong among the Nguni where, unlike the Sotho, couples often ate separately and did not jointly entertain. The traditional African wife performed many of her tasks - collecting wood and water and thatching grass, stamping mealies - in a group with other women and girls. More formally organised work parties, so dependent on the provision of beer for success, were held less often by Christians, who could only offer tea. Thus the sociability and mutual support offered by the prayer group should also be seen as a desired supplement to the isolation and monotony of nuclear family responsibilities in the Western model propagated by the missionaries. Other Christian women substituted for kin in their help at times of crisis - sickness, death - and provided mutual care. Hence the request of the manyano woman to the group to 'give me a hand to pick up the burden', and the resolve of another in trouble: 'I must get some strength from the mothers in this chain.'[57]

The more regular attendance of women at church services as well as at their weekly prayer meetings has also been related convincingly by

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56 N. B. Leis, 'Women in Groups: Ijaw Women's Associations', in M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (eds.), Woman, Culture, and Society (Stanford, 1974), 240-1.

57 Pauw, Christianity, 96.

Jean Comaroff to their domestic experience, that is, their traditional ties to 'defined, sequential tasks' through responsibility for routine agricultural work, cooking and child-rearing. Conversely, 'male participation in any routinized, defined associational activity is infrequent', for among Tswana no less than Zulu, even after hunting and warfare were curbed, men valued freedom for 'gossiping, pursuing traditional political activities, or drinking with friends', while women wanted increasingly to organise their time and activities in the face of disintegrating domestic and local kinship groups.[58]

c) Uniforms, Fund-raising and Temperance

We have no exploration of the role of costume among Christian Africans comparable with Hilda Kuper's sensitive discussion of the way clothing and hair styles in traditional society express an individual's identity and stage in the life cycle.[59] Nevertheless, it is clear that among the first converts, the adoption of Western clothing signified commitment to new religious beliefs. As such clothing became more widely available, however, it could no longer be assumed to be an outward sign of inward spiritual grace. Categories blurred once more. Church uniforms should be interpreted as the reassertion of a distinctive Christian dress, proclaiming spiritual allegiance. Being 'bloused' by the prayer union was a milestone of religious commitment and a reward for upright living. For women, it also advertised marital respectability, thus partially overcoming the lack of symbolic particularity in Western female dress. As a black woman scholar has commented,

> The Swazi deplore the introduction of Western dress because they say that no one can tell who is a child, a maiden, a marriageable woman, a bride or even somebody's wife. No one can tell who is a widow and who has a baby at the breast.[60]

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58 Comaroff, 'Cosmology', 167-9; Krige, Social System, 184-5.

59 'Costume and Identity', Comparative Studies in Society and History, v. 15 (1973).

60 See over.

Thus a badge or ribbon, considered adequate corporate identification by white leaders, could not suffice for women manyano members. The desire to distinguish the especially devout by uniforms should also be seen in the context of the second and third generation church, whose membership is more of a mixture of both nominal and zealous believers. Uniforms mark out an elite, and further refinements of status declaration become possible: thus Methodist African ministers' wives on the Rand today wear a red cape over their Manyano uniform, and those who have been Manyano President are entitled to a special kind of jacket with an attachable cape. One can also wear an accumulation of several different uniforms - Manyano, choir, Independent Order of True Templars - augmenting one's total status, as happens among the Tshidi. There, the question 'Do you robe yourself?' is now synonomous with 'Are you a church goer?', as uniformed groups sit en bloc at all services, festivals, weddings and funerals, so effectively uniform has replaced Western clothing as the mark of Christian commitment.[61]

The influence of military uniforms on dress adopted by religious movements in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain - the Salvation Army, the Boys' Brigade, Scouts - is unmistakable; military models played a part in at least two African revivalist movements in South Africa at that time too. The ABM Voluntiya adopted a khaki coat (with black trousers) in imitation of those British Boer War soldiers whose name they also borrowed, while Natal Methodist prayer women were impressed with Queen Victoria's redcoats stationed near Pietermaritzburg in the same war. Consequently, at Edendale in 1907 they 'suggested uniforms in the

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60 R. G. Twala, 'Umhlanga (Reed) Ceremony of the Swazi Maidens', AS, 11, 3 (Sept. 1952), 103.

61 Comaroff, 'Cosmology', 203-14. The attraction of grandiose titles, special regalia and elaborate rituals for passage from one 'degree' to another, in the African Independent Order of True Templars of the 1890's (Mills, 'African Clergy', 163), can be attributed similarly to the search for elite status in an all-inclusive Christian community.

same colours...which were black tunics, red coats with white polo collars, and white helmets. So they decided the Transvaal women should wear the same colours as they were soldiers of the cross.' Though the well-known Manyano uniform of black skirts, red blouses, and white collars and hats later came to have attributed to it the signification of 'the blackness of sin, the blood of Christ and the purity of a life truly cleansed', symbolism noted already by the Primitives in 1925, it is by no means certain that the military example originally owed its appeal to such traditional Christian colour symbolism.[62] The correspondence between the uniform decided on by Zulu Methodist women and the ordered sequence of colour symbolism still widely employed by the Zulu in treating illness, cannot be accidental and has the contemporary enthusiastic assent of Natal churchwomen.[63] Black, red and white medicines are always used in that order. Black and red, being equivocal, standing for both goodness and badness - black implies darkness, red symbolises transformation - are used to expel evil from the system and strengthen the body against future attacks. White medicines, identified with light and purity, provide the emetic to regain good health and balance. Although it is unlikely that documentary or oral historical evidence will make it possible to chronicle the process by which this symbolic complex fed into and fused with Christian notions like the blood of Jesus cleansing us from all sin, the internal logic of such a process is clear.

While the impulse to wear uniform at all came from African women, the determination to indeed standardise dress and make it uniform came from

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62 Manyano-Kopano; Hewson, Introduction, 100; Advance (August 1925), 146; TM, (Jan. 1935), 6.

63 Ngubane, Body and Mind, Ch. 7, 'Colour Symbolism in Medicine', and personal communication. For Christian rejection of such colours see Sundkler, Prophets, 214, on the Zionist aversion to the colours red and black, for links with blood and death, and their strong preference for white.

the second white woman president of the Transvaal Methodist Manyano, Mrs. Allcock. Mrs. Burnet introduced a Manyano badge, but otherwise the 'red-blouse women' followed whim as regards the cut, exact colour and material for the blouse; as the kappies or doeks proposed in the constitution had gone out of fashion by the 1920's, members wore any sort of white hat. The jubilee pamphlet simultaneously conveys the resentment provoked by Mrs. Allcock's insistence on regulation dress and concedes the need for and benefits of greater uniformity:

> ...one can imagine what the uniform looked like to one fresh from abroad and to a cultured mind. This was a good opportunity for an ambitious Missionary's wife to use her powers of organising and, of course, of having the right thing done as prescribed on the rule card. Like all good leaders she went on steadily with the change she wanted to effect on this funny uniform...She was firm in her criticisms, not letting any pass unnoticed who was not wearing the right uniform. She had a big heart. She was a mother kind and loving...It took all Mrs. Allcock's time of Presidency to get this uniform right when straw hats and felt hats, crochet collars and blouses of all colours of the blood family to pink and mauve were discarded.

Opposition became acrimonious: one elderly minister's wife, behaving 'like a cheeky schoolgirl', was eventually suspended because she and her members refused to buy the regulation ready-made blouses and collars supplied by a firm in England through Mrs. Allcock. These were meant to be compulsory for new members. Even Mrs. Allcock's successor, Mrs. Kidwell, could only claim that 'an increasing number of women are wearing the uniform blouses every year', while not even all the leaders dressed alike.[64] The officials admitted that the gathered members in convention in their uniforms were 'a real fine sight'. Insistence on greater regularity of dress not only increased the sense of corporate unity; it also instilled in members an almost obsessive concern with the minutiae of apparel that has endured.

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64 Manyano-Kopano; Cory MS 15 855, Mrs. Kidwell's newsletters, 27 Oct. 1934 and 1935.

The authors of 'The Story of the Manyano' spend virtually one fifth of their space on the sartorial details of the uniform controversy, while Pauw records a similar formalism in the Transkei Manyano discussions of the type of collar to be worn on the girls' uniform and on the wearing of jackets over the women's uniform. For Brandel-Syrier, the smell 'of soap and starch' was what characterised manyanos in the 1950's.[65]

But it was not simply pride in cleanliness, neatness and correctness which gave uniforms such importance. Uniforms acquired mystical significance beyond their colour symbolism. To be qualified to don the uniform was a serious matter. Methodist conventions came to have a regular robing ceremony, which was 'always an awe-inspiring moment'. The Primitives perhaps reacted particularly emotionally: 'All rise as the robes are placed on the new members, and the weeping and wailing of the people are scarcely drowned by the singing of the congregation.' The attention paid to the uniform in the 1920's must have helped to build up that almost fetishistic attitude noted by Comaroff in Mafeking at the start of the 1970's across the denominations - that sickness or trouble 'induced by the uniform' followed offences committed in uniform.[66]

Methodists in the Transkei evolved a different uniform, consisting of black skirts and white blouses, which they were allowed to retain for a while after the Transvaal uniform was adopted as standard for the Manyano throughout South Africa in 1933. The same colour combination was adopted by Transkei Anglican women and Natal American Board members, with the distinguishing addition of the Mothers' Union badge and the pink ribbon respectively. It was this uniform which the sister movements on the Reef

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65 Manyano-Kopano; Pauw, Christianity, 94-5; Brandel-Syrier, Black Woman, 50.

66 Advance (Feb. 1925), 25; Comaroff, 'Cosmology', 204-5, 222.

also came to adopt. No official explanation as to origins or symbolism from any of the three churches has been encountered, although it has been suggested that the white and black habits of the CSMV nuns who came to St. Cuthbert's in the Transkei the year after the African MU began, may have influenced the uniform. The white apron and scarlet cross worn in addition by black Anglican women there into the 1920's seem to bolster this view, for the nuns wore crosses and the front section of their garment was somewhat apron-like.[67]

As with the Methodists, so in the case of the ABM, once uniform had been adopted on the African women's initiative, it was white women who pushed for standardisation. On the Reef it was Mrs. Bridgman who urged the Isililo members to all wear 'one and the same thing' as the Methodists and Anglicans did.[68] In the Anglican WHS, the uniform was firmly entrenched by the mid-1920's when older members especially were reported to show great disapproval if others did not appear in it at meetings or wore a variation. A woman missionary was once 'imperatively asked to journey over 100 miles to settle a point of uniform!' Little evidence of garb in earlier years survives. The bronze WHS cross, reminding members 'of what was once suffered for them' and 'of their call to a higher life' (the motto on it was 'Onward and Upward'), was worn with pride. The importance of correct dress emerges in Wilfrid Parker's amused tale of how the women of Messina 'solemnly questioned' him as to their proper dress for their Thursday meetings. He explained through two interpreters as best he could, got the local nuns to make a model blouse from 'a paper pattern of the

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67 Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa 1933, 259; S. Green, The First Hundred Years 1873-1973. The Story of the Diocese of St. John's South Africa (Umtata, 1974), 203.

68 Interview, Mrs. Mavimbela. Note the mutual self-awareness of the three churches chosen for this study.

holy garment' he had sent from Johannesburg, and was drawn into further correspondence when the catechist wrote for further details of the 'tarbon' (sic) they must put on. White Anglican women repeatedly de-emphasised uniform in vain. In the 1936 reorganisation of the WHS, it was clearly asserted that the uniform was not compulsory. A Natal missionary, perhaps with Zionists in mind, primly observed, 'Considering the multiplicity of "uniforms" seen in Native country, members of the Mothers' Union would be well advised to make their homes distinctive, and keep their clothes commonplace.' A decade later, Agnes Beale, the head of the African MU in Johannesburg, lamented that 'Some members are still apt to over-emphasise the non-essentials, such as badges, uniform, rules for absentees (all hardy annuals)'.[69] White Anglicans continued for decades to show reluctance to tolerate the very great intrinsic value and significance which devout African churchwomen found in uniforms; friction over this issue persisted long after the Second World War.

Dorothea Lehmann has aptly observed[70] that life in extended family groups trained African women to find the organisation of social activities, catering for big festivals, and collecting money very satisfying duties; all these managerial tasks were theirs in prayer unions, particularly at convention time. Although recent studies of manyanos stress the importance of fund-raising, joint financial projects emerged in the Transvaal Methodist Manyano and the Natal Isililo only some years after each movement's inception. In both cases, great keenness was shown once a meaningful object - which advanced their children's financial security -

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69 TSR (Jan. 1927), 27; USPG, E, A. Snow, 1912; MF (June 1933), 143; The Kingdom (Sept. 1936); SWM Journal (April 1936), 8; The Watchman (Feb. 1946), 6.

70 'Women in the Independent African Churches', in V. E. W. Hayward (ed.), African Independent Church Movements (London, 1963), 65.

was selected for which funds had to be gradually collected.

The Methodist women began banking their offerings in 1915; at every convention, there was a formal reception of contributions from branches to the 'Shilling Fund', which amounted to £150 altogether in savings by 1921. The objective dear to the heart of Vice-President Mrs. Kumalo was an industrial training school similar to the one she had attended in Natal, the idea being to offer to their daughters a fuller life. As Mrs. Kumalo was also a driving force behind the Young Women's Prayer Union, it is quite possible that she envisaged better educational opportunities and consequent well-paid employment as the way forward for young Christian girls - offering something positive in addition to the negative protective sanctions of Manyano rules. Rev. Allcock kept his promise that once the women had raised £1,000, the church would donate a sum to match it. In 1929, five hundred women in uniform proceeded from their Nancefield convention to Kilnerton, near Pretoria, to attend the opening of the Domestic Science School there which their money had made possible. By 1933, they had contributed a total of £2,806 to the school, a stupendous sum when it is remembered that it came from annual shilling contributions from women who, because they were Christians, were in fact cut off from most of the more lucrative employment opportunities. Only the very poor and the very old were excused from this annual donation. In 1940, the women handed over another £1,000 to assist with housing provision for girls at Kilnerton; they subsequently became dissatisfied with the course provided there, as girls who had done it 'were unable to find suitable and satisfactory employment'. Local Manyano branches also took on smaller projects; those at Crown Mines, Spes Bona, Krugersdorp and New Comet, for instance, improved their churches in 1927 by gifts of

pulpit, communion rail and furniture.[71]

The Johannesburg Isililo was small, as has already been indicated, so impressive fund-raising projects were not to be expected from it. It is, however, a fascinating footnote to the enthusiasm generated by promises of ICU farm-buying in the late 1920's, to discover that the Natal Isililo women conceived the identical goal for their fund, buying an Umzinto farm in 1928. It is very probable that they were also spurred on by the example of that ABM offshoot, the African Congregational Church, which became a company in 1925 and bought a number of farms and stands. The same shrewd assessment of the future, the same concern that their children should be provided for, as had been shown by the Methodist mothers, emerges from the ABM women's venture into real estate: 'if their children became destitute, they could live there'.[72]

Leith-Ross tells of a dull Methodist service in West Africa in which the offering was the highpoint of interest, a reality which all could appreciate: 'But when the time came for the collection, it was as if the wind of the Spirit had at last blown through the building'. More recent accounts from the Reef repeat the picture of the giving of money as a personal triumph, a time of cheerful dancing and ostentatious offering.[73] The different style widely adopted by African church members for church fund-raising seems to have owed something to both the missionary insistence on self-support and the centrality of money in the lives of those short of it and new to it.

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71 TM (Nov. 1928); WMDT (1930-31), 2; Allcock Papers, sheet on the school's cost; TM (May 1940), 3; Cory MS 15 855, Mrs. Kidwell newsletter, 27 Oct. 1934; Manyano-Kopano; WMDT (1928-9), 30. African women's political organisations struggled, by contrast, to raise funds. See Walker, 'Women', 305-7.

72 Sundkler, Prophets, 128; Umlandu, 5-8.

73 S. Leith-Ross, African Women. A Study of the Ibo of Nigeria (London, 1965, first pub. 1939), 122-3; Brandel-Syrier, Black Woman, 74-6, 82-3.

Temperance was another thread running through most women's prayer unions and prominent in the three analysed here. In rural areas, abstinence from kaffir beer was a Christian demand that African males found exacting; in urban areas like the Rand after the First World War, where there was a ready market for beer brewed by African women, temperance put added strains on African women. Yet the demand for strict rules on the matter appears to have come from, or at least was readily endorsed by, black churchwomen.

By 1919, it was a rule of the Anglican Women's Help Society that members could not brew, drink or sell kaffir beer or any kind of strong drink. The problem even at that stage was not any personal love of drink by members, but that brewing was the quickest and easiest money-earner, providing in a week what a woman washing and ironing could barely make in a month. A woman missionary paid tribute to the best of the WHS women, who had set their faces against liquor, as 'shining lights in the midst of darkness of vice, drink and immorality'. It was usually left to the missionary to confront the defaulting beer-maker who still wished to be considered a Society member. As a long-time member recalls, indirect allusion was the method the women themselves preferred: 'Nobody would say, "I know what you are; you can't do this"...the one who preaches would just say, "You mothers, maybe we should try to help ourselves and not drink, not brew beer because we are destroying our homes."' Those who did not brew were given special silver brooches. The dilemma of the dutiful wife who could not honestly wear this 'pin' was voiced thus by one member: 'I don't want to be deceitful to God, because my husband is drinking - I brew it for my husband, and if his friends come, should I drive them away?'[74]

Temperance featured regularly at Methodist Manyano conventions - the 1912 gathering even had 'many hard things' to say about the taking of

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74 USPG, CWW, Kent to Saunders, 19 Nov. 1919; Interview, Mrs. Mguli.

snuff. In 1923, devoting a whole day to temperance advocacy, the convention 'carried with enthusiasm' an addition to the Manyano rule, that no member was 'allowed to brew, sell or drink kaffir beer or any intoxicating liquor'. It was a traditional and sacred Methodist duty to challenge the authorities on the liquor question: this was one issue of government policy allowed to impinge on the prayer union. (By contrast, when the Afrikaner-Labour Pact threatened to win the 1924 election and Primitive Methodist women 'wanted to hold a prayer meeting' in Market Square, Johannesburg, to 'pray for the success of the British cause', the white minister dissuaded them.) An old political campaigner, not herself a Wesleyan Methodist, assisted in this process: it was after Mrs. Maxeke spoke on the evils of illicit brewing and the four objectionable clauses in the Roos Liquor Bill to the 1927 convention, that it passed some strong resolutions on the Bill which the President presented to the Minister of Justice in Pretoria on 11 January 1928. At Barberton in October 1930, the women passed a resolution against Pirow's proposed introduction of the Tot System (by which workers were part paid in alcohol).[75]

The urban African wife economically dependent on her husband's wage had a lower economic status that the rural wife with her own huts and fields. She could increase her importance to the town household by substantial earnings, but as these were procurable only from liquor brewing, the upright manyano member making money from washing was inevitably more dependent on her husband. In April 1932, seven hundred Methodist Manyano women meeting at Albert Street in connection with the annual church conference, passed a resolution lodging their 'strong protest' against proposals in the Amending Liquor Bill to extend the Tot system to the

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75 FF (April 1913), 253; Manyano Rules; TM (Nov. 1923), 30, (Nov. 1927), 6, (Nov. 1930), 5.

Transvaal and open wine and beer shops on the Reef. Their concluding assertion makes utterly explicit that dependence on husband's wages of the black Christian married woman who, on religious grounds, eschewed the most lucrative occupation open to her sex: 'We, the Natives, have not asked for this liquor and we need the money our men earn for the support of ourselves and our children.'[76] That is, if a woman did not brew, she certainly did not want her husband to drink either. A teetotalling wife had a vested interest in her husband's temperance.

The American Board missionaries in South Africa played the central role in the promotion of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) among African women. Laura Bridgman, though without experience of temperance work in America, was driven in 1879-80 to a determined campaign to urge personal abstinence from beer on the Christians at Umzumbe by the 'apparent hopelessness' of mission work while drinking was so widespread. After another American woman founded a branch of the WCTU for white women in Natal in 1889, Mrs. Bridgman became President of the organisation, until 1893. A 'Department of Native Work' was created which was purely evangelistic, allowing no badges or unions until a separate Coloured and Native WCTU, directly affiliated with the world body, was formed in 1911. As the entire South African membership of this Union amounted to only 873 at the end of 1924 (to the 4,019 white members), it was not a large association by comparison with the prayer unions, but its influence was wider than its membership. In particular, it had an ecumenical slant from early on, and

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76 Umteteli, 14 May 1932. Cf. J. P. Kiernan, 'Poor and Puritan; an attempt to view Zionism as a collective response to urban poverty', AS, 36, 1 (1977), 36. He sees it as logically to the advantage of women to deprive their men of drinking, smoking and womanising, eliminate wasteful expenditure which their poverty can't support and redirect the man's concerns 'from outside socializing on to his obligations towards his home and family'.

regularly gathered women from all the other missions. In 1909 in Durban, for instance, where the veteran campaigner's daughter-in-law, Clara Bridgman, was then stationed with her husband, a monthly WCTU meeting of this kind was held.[77]

After the war, Clara Bridgman took up this temperance work on the Reef. She started three Native WCTU branches in 1923, and another two the following year, when four joint quarterly meetings were well attended. African women by this stage had become used to meeting on special occasions for prayer with women of other churches. The Native WCTU found its rationale in this perhaps, as with so many other projects with which the ABM was involved, because the church to which Mrs. Bridgman belonged was relatively small on the Reef, too small to provide a wide enough scope for someone of her energies and determination. Interdenominational organisations broadened the sphere of influence open to her. From the mid-1930's, she supervised a Native WCTU programme for United Temperance and Mothers' Meetings, held usually at fortnightly intervals, each time at a different centre along the Reef. Attendance might range from fifty to 250, and arrangements were usually delegated to a local minister's wife for, as in manyanos, such wives provided the officers of the Union. The 1936 meetings, particularly marked for their 'friendly cooperation' and 'beautiful spirit of enthusiasm and fellowship', added three hundred new members, making the 1937 total a thousand from Randfontein to Springs in fourteen branches. Large annual one-day conventions were held at the close of the decade: four hundred women from fifteen denominations gathered

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77 ABC: 15.4 v.48, 'The Beginnings of the Temperance Movement at Umzumbe Mission Station, Natal, South Africa. Taken from the Manuscript Reminiscences of Mrs. L. B. Bridgman'; A Brief History of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in South Africa (Cape Town, 1925), 14, 31-2; ABC: 15.4 v.22, General Letter, 1909.

at the ABM Doornfontein church in August 1938, all in their distinctive church uniforms, and seven hundred from sixteen churches came in 1939. They read reports and shared 'fellowship and inspiration'. The Congregationalists have a leading role in current church unity efforts in South Africa, but their ecumenical projects have a long ancestry. Clara Bridgman also had a hand in the African Women's World Day of Prayer, where again uniforms were worn; eight hundred from various churches attended in 1932, for example.[78]

The chief reasons for suspension from, or failure to achieve enrolment in the Reef Anglican women's society were liquor selling and marital infidelity. The Transvaal Methodists suspended some sixty to one hundred and twenty members of the Manyano per year, according to records. Occasionally, the records note church members apprehended for liquor crimes by the state. In the early 1920's, for instance, a renegade Crown Mines American Board evangelist and his wife were arrested and convicted for illicit liquor selling and sent to the Fort for a month, while two Primitive Methodist women from Benoni were fined £50 for selling kaffir beer. The white superintendent, after expelling the latter two from the church, considered that the incident proved 'once more that the natives will not "give each other away" even in church life because of their fear of retaliation through witchcraft'. A more charitable conclusion might be that fellow church members were only too aware themselves of the financial need which gave the possible profits from brewing and selling such allure. One or two isolated tales of the conversion of women brewers survive, in Methodist records. In 1925 a brewer who had caused much trouble in a location - 'Many souls were trapped in that house', said the

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78 ABC: 15.4 v.39, Transvaal Annual Reports 1922-3, 1924; v.44, Johannesburg Medical and Social Welfare Work. Bridgman Memorial Hospital, 1935; Mrs. Bridgman's Work, Reports 1936-9; v.45, Mrs. Bridgman to Miss Emerson, 17 Feb. 1932.

African minister - began attending revival meetings after allowing the organisers to hold prayer gatherings in her house. Though weighed down because she had 'helped the devil to tempt God's children', she eventually gained assurance of salvation. Her den was closed and she became a member on trial. The brute economic facts of such conversions, however, were underlined in 1939 by the 'story of a skokiaan queen whose experience of Christ lifted her out of her lucrative traffic, and set her back at the wash-tub'.[79] Few if any washer-women could be self-supporting. Devout Christianity therefore necessarily entailed greater relative poverty or increasing dependence on a husband or both for African women in this period. The temperance proviso, by outlawing brewing, worked to reinforce that sexual division of labour deemed appropriate in Christian families - husbands provided the main household earnings for wives and children dependent on them. The variety of attachments with men facilitated by the financial independence of the successful brewer occasioned condemnation along with her involvement in the drink traffic.

The indications are that the prayer groups for African women established by other Reef missions in the 1920's developed similar emphases to those common among the three of this study. The Christian Women's Federation of the Lutheran Church adopted rules in 1928 in Johannesburg which stressed the importance of Christian homes; women's role in their children's upbringing and the care of daughters come to work in town; temperance; and visiting the sick. The Dutch Reformed Church started a women's association in 1923 which had twelve branches on the Rand by the time of its 1926 conference, which took the familiar form of giving annual reports

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79 Interview, Mrs. Mguli; ABC: 15.4 v.39, Catlin, Transvaal Report 1924-5; MMS 1142, Johannesburg Sept. 1922; WMDT (1926-7), 4-5; TM (Sept. 1939), 5.

and handing in funds. Weekly meetings were started by the black women of the Swiss Mission in Doornfontein and Village Main in 1921, and later in the 1920's at Sophiatown and Alexandra. Though the women missionaries attended periodically, they were urged in 1935 to leave the Alexandra one entirely to the women themselves, so that they could 'gardent leur caractere de "sirilo" (lamentations)', which provides a clear parallel with the ABM Isililo.[80] Inter-church meetings are more possible and therefore more frequent in town, and it has already been shown that African women from other churches often attended conventions, all-night gatherings for praying and preaching, and temperance meetings. Emulation of each other's style obviously occurred through these interdenominational encounters, which Sundkler notes as more common among women that men.[81] There was more scope for women to learn from each other and through mutual influence adopt a distinctive female revivalism, it could be argued, because there was not in each denomination the same fixed conception about female as there was about male ministry; furthermore, cut off from formal ordained ministry, women had no vested interest in denominational differences as male leaders did. Their marginality gave them a kind of freedom to experiment and make Christianity their own.

African women Christians had more contact with black believers in other denominations than they did with white church members of their own denomination. The ABM was entirely a mission church, so there were not

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80 South African Library, Cape Town, 'Die Christelike Vrouefederasie van die Lutherse Kerk...Wette' (Pretoria, Mimeo); Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk Argief, Pretoria, Verslae van Kompoundsending 1905-46, Reports for 1924, 1926 and 1929; WUL, Swiss Mission Papers, 26/1 Johannesburg, Reports for 1921-2, 1923, 1924 and 1929, also L. Borel, 'Rapport sur le travail dans les locations des noirs de Johannesburg 1935'.

81 Sundkler, Prophets, 92.

corresponding white congregations. Among the Anglicans, a member recalled the 1930's and 1940's as a time when white and black Anglican women were equally uninterested in the other's doings, the only exception for the Africans being 'that one who would lead us'. The change came in the 1950's: 'We mixed with Europeans when Mrs. Reeves came.' The white women presidents of the Methodist Manyano provided the only vital link between white and black Methodist women. Mrs. Burnet and Mrs. Cox, while leaders of the Manyano, also took the initiative in 1915 in organising the local white women's church groups under a District Council with its own constitution. This Women's Association (WA) held its first annual conference in 1917 and Mrs. Burnet was its first president. Mrs. Allcock linked the two groups more closely by suggesting in 1922 that it was now the WA's duty 'to care for our sisters of another colour'. By that time the Women's Auxiliary under the South African Conference, also begun in 1915, was supporting ten African Biblewomen, mostly in the Transkei, married women who had first proved their faithfulness and their preaching and teaching abilities in the Manyano, and were paid £18 a year. With an eye to this example, at Mrs. Allcock's urging, the Transvaal women appointed a Biblewoman in Swaziland in 1924, another at Mafeking in 1927 and in 1934 a third to work in the townships of western Johannesburg. These women's reports were published and information about their progress relayed for WA benefit in the Transvaal Methodist. As already mentioned, the local WA always paid a visit to the Manyano Convention. These links, while greater than in the Anglican case, were not particularly intimate or regular below the level of the leadership. The style and content of WA meetings were also very different; the main purpose behind them appeared to be fund-raising, judging from one report: 'The year has been filled with the usual Church activities, Bazaars and Sales of various kinds, Socials, Concerts, Teas,

Talent Schemes, etc.' Black women's Christianity owed virtually nothing to white models of this kind.[82]

Brandel noted in the 1950's that it was much easier to generalise about the manyanos than the churches, for they followed more of a common pattern 'in which doctrinal and ritual characteristics of the churches hardly become apparent'. This entire chapter has attempted to account for this common pattern, both sociologically and historically, but a concluding comment on the Methodists is necessary. The penetration of other churches by the emotionalism of African Methodism has been noted by scholars like Pauw, while Comaroff describes Methodism as 'the prototype of Christian orthodoxy' among Mafeking Rolong. There, worship and ritual styles, songs and uniform, for groups from the Anglicans through to independent churches, derive from the Methodist model, while the praying and preaching in all churches but the Catholic are 'remarkably similar'. Anglican leaders lamented Methodist influence on black women: St. Cyprian's Church Council in Johannesburg rebuked its Mothers' Union 'for showing a strong inclination towards the non-Conformist habits and customs', and the MU organiser in the Transkei later explained that many branches had 'grown crooked' because the Methodist Manyano movement especially had 'drawn' them 'aside'.[83] In fact, as the material on the 1890's makes clear, those characteristics assumed to be Methodist had, in the ABM, an independent origin in American revivalism. But the vitality and numerical strength of the Methodist Church among Africans in South Africa have undoubtedly contributed to its permeation of other denominations. A further factor that should not be overlooked in accounting for the Methodist style of all manyanos is the marriage of Methodist women to men of other churches, for such women were

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82 Interview, Mrs. Mguli; The Story of the Methodist Women's Auxiliary in South Africa (1961; first pub. 1937), 35, 46-51.

83 See over.

numerous, as one can deduce from the size of the Methodist church. They invariably joined their husband's church, bringing with them the emphasis on extempore prayer, lively singing and fervent preaching that is characteristically Methodist. One such Cape woman, who became an Anglican, testified how she and fellow former Nonconformists used to extempore prayer in the Sunday services but faced now with the written Anglican liturgy, welcomed all the more the outlet provided in the women's prayer meeting for familiar and cherished modes of religious behaviour.[84]

Methodist influence cannot simply be explained, however, in terms of numerical predominance and female geographical and religious mobility. What the manyano came to stand for as a whole was meaningful to many Christian African women at the beginning of this century - spontaneous prayer out loud about personal needs; extempore evangelistic preaching to groups; a leadership role for ministers' wives and older married women generally; a way of showing concern for one's children, especially wayward daughters, at a time when old controls were failing; a distinctive identity as devout Christian women marked out by dress and expressed in corporate gatherings and fund-raising.

Like nineteenth-century maternal associations in America, manyanos were 'grass-roots responses to the contemporary cultural and religious elevation of the mother's role'. Though likewise restrained in part by the very concerns which brought women into spiritual association (religious conviction and their family role),[85] they exhibited, in their freedom from male and ecclesiastical domination, an eloquent female solidarity and a fervently African Christianity.

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83 Brandel, 'Needs', 173; Pauw, 'Influence', 433; Comaroff, 'Cosmology', 78-81, 216; WUL, AB 627, St. Cyprian's Church Council Minute Book 28 July 1942; SWM Journal (Oct. 1951), 9.

84 Interview, Mrs. Mguli. The ABM member interviewed, Mrs. Mavimbela, was similarly a former Methodist, from Natal.

85 Cott, Bonds, 149, 156.

PART III

WHITE WOMEN - SOCIAL WORK AND CHILDREN

The two main prayer associations discussed in Part II were founded before the end of the first decade of this century. They soon developed quite robust autonomy. This meant that they did not provide the major outlet for white female mission initiative. Besides, by the period between the World Wars, Reef missionaries were generally moving out of a direct evangelistic and pastoral role. Males supervised the school system and the growing number of African ministers and preachers. Females, particularly in the Anglican Church, moved into Christian social work. This philanthropy sometimes had a moral bias, as in hostels, sometimes a medical, as in mother and baby clinics. Predominantly, though, it concentrated on recreation and extra-curricular education for black children. Youth work was the chief occupation of the young or unmarried women missionaries in the inter-war period.

All the projects discussed below reflect the ambiguous nature of missionary mediation in a society sharply divided on race and class lines. Johannesburg in the 1920's was becoming more segregated and polarised. Missionaries correspondingly saw themselves increasingly as inter-racial 'go-betweens' and 'interpreters', terms they themselves used. In hostels they mediated between classes; in Sunday schools, between races. In the 'settlement house' effort, the overlapping of race and class emerges most clearly.

CHAPTER 6

HOSTELS AND HOUSEWIFERY

a) 'Christian Compounds for Girls'

Compounds in the mining industry gave Rand and Kimberley capitalists a vital means of industrial and police control of their labour force, as well as enabling them 'to provide amenities such as recreation and health supervision', no less important for the smooth running of the mines. Local authorities adapted this idea in open compounds for casual labourers and, as Davenport has noted, 'it was a short step from the municipal compound to the "native hostel", which became a common feature of municipal locations in the larger centres under the stimulus of the Urban Areas Act of 1923'.[1]

This chapter examines three hostels for African women which were established in Johannesburg by missionaries of the Anglican and Methodist Churches, and the American Board Mission. These hostels were, in a sense, attempts to set up Christian compounds for girls,[2] centres of accommodation which would limit the free movement (especially at night) and supervise the employment of African females, most of whom were domestic servants. There were, however, key differences between these church efforts, which were duplicated in other large urban centres like Pretoria and Cape Town, and mine compounds. For one thing, 'recreation and health supervision' was a priority in church hostels on moral and religious grounds, rather than for reasons of industrial efficiency; that is, African women and girls

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1 T. R. H. Davenport, South Africa: A Modern History (Johannesburg, 1977), 355-6.

2 I owe this apt phrase to Rev. J. Wing, General Secretary of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa; Interview, 11 Oct. 1977. An earlier version of this chapter was published as '"Christian Compounds for Girls": Church Hostels for African Women in Johannesburg, 1907-1970', JSAS, 6, 1 (Oct. 1979).

were to be kept sexually chaste by means of safe accommodation, regular spiritual teaching, constructive use of leisure, and the personal 'motherly' supervision of a 'kindly Christian Matron'. The moral purity and security of women was of intrinsic religious value in missionary eyes, though they also pointed out to whites whom they hoped to win over, the advantage of having healthy, decent female servants working in their homes and looking after their children. Secondly, hostels depended on voluntary applications. The residents were not all working in one industrial concern which compelled them to live in its compound; they could choose to come and go, though they might be asked to leave for breaking hostel rules. Nevertheless, the hostels evolved within a context of missionary thinking about the urbanisation of African women which had, certainly up to the 1930's, a decided bias towards compulsion, so that their characterisation as female Christian compounds is not altogether unwarranted.

The SANAC Report came out strongly in favour of the promotion of a class of African female domestics. However, as this work would expose African women to 'much temptation and the danger of moral ruin', employers must protect and care for the character of their servants; furthermore, if collective efforts to promote this aim appeared feasible, 'provision might be made for the formation of Societies which would undertake the duty of protecting female workers by securing suitable employment for them and providing them with homes or refuges while awaiting employment'.[3]

When Deaconess Julia Gilpin came out to the Rand in 1907, it was precisely the attitudes shown in the SANAC Report which gave her hope for

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3 South African Native Affairs Commission, Vol. 1, Report of the Commission (Cape Town, 1905), 83. On domestic servants, see further Ch. 3, section b).

the development of contacts with the African women in domestic service whom she wished to reach. She and her helpers could do much good in such circumstances, the Deaconess explained, by means of a hostel for girls until they found situations, combined with a Registry office and dormitories for women not living with their employers. This stance was coupled with the view that women servants were the remedy for the current 'Black Peril' outrages on white women, while the objection that African girls needed training if they were not to be useless servants, was conveniently answered by the small Industrial School Deaconess Julia started that year.[4] The 'English Church Native Girls' Hostel' got going in 1908 too, in the house in Buxton Street, Doornfontein, where the women missionaries lived. It seems to have lapsed within a year or two, but was restarted in 1911 by another lady missionary, Theodora Williams, who set aside two rooms for women and girls from the country to sleep in.[5] She put up a new building in 1914; of whitewashed brick, it had 'green window curtains, red blankets on the iron bedsteads, and white and red quilts' and looked 'very cheerful and pretty'. She was sure 'hundreds' of 'respectable' girls would welcome it.

In further explaining the philosophy surrounding the hostel's establishment, it is enlightening to compare this work with that done on a much larger scale among servants and other working girls in England. First of all, the preservation of female chastity was an important activity

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4 C.R., Nos. 21 and 23 (1908).

5 USPG, E, Agnes Beale, 3 Jan. 1937, English Church Native Girls' Hostel, Doornfontein. 1908-1936 (pamphlet enclosure); Mrs. Jones, 1911; WW Africa, Williams to Miss Saunders, 6 Sept. 1914.

for religious women throughout the nineteenth century. Ellice Hopkins, an associate of Josephine Butler (the renowned campaigner against the Contagious Diseases Act), founded Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls in the large towns, to get a hold on 'ignorant girls when first launched into the world', to prevent their moral downfall. From the 1850's, Evangelicals paid particular attention to hostels and leisure occupation for working girls, the YWCA being the best known initiative. Their motives were both religious and social.[6]

Brian Harrison, in his fascinating study of the Girls' Friendly Society (GFS),[7] sees the shepherding of young working-class girls as more than an activity of purity-preservation. He argues that late nineteenth century family organisations in Britain like the GFS and the Mothers' Union were, as vehicles of social, religious and domestic discipline, essential sources of strength to the late Victorian Conservative revival. Both organisations were, like early Anglican women's religious communities, shot through with class division and structured deliberately on two tiers; thus the core of the operations of the GFS, which had nearly a quarter of a million members at its peak in 1913, was a semi-maternal relationship between an upper-class Anglican 'associate' and a virtuous, unmarried working-girl member who might be of any denomination. The associate in no way sought to challenge existing social relations but 'aimed at

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6 M. P. Hall and I. V. Howes, The Church in Social Work (London, 1965), 25; Heasman, Evangelicals, 116-121, and Ch. VII, 'The Teenager', generally.

7 B. Harrison, 'For Church, Queen and Family: The Girls' Friendly Society 1874-1920', Past & Present, 61 (1973).

transcending social class divisions through cultivating individual friendships'. The Society acquired a servant-girl image, from the days when most of its employed members were domestics, which it never shook off. It worked hard to help these members find positions through a network of registry offices, of which there were forty-eight by 1883, finding work for 4,000 girls a year, and linked with a Central Employment Office from 1905. The Anglicans in South Africa never came near to matching such massive organisation, but familiarity with this work in England clearly informed the thinking and planning of the women missionaries who came out to Johannesburg; besides, at least four of them belonged to the GFS.[8]

The idea of hostels for African women was embedded in a cluster of issues relating to the urbanisation of African women, and although there is a certain artificiality in separating out aspects of a question usually raised simultaneously - the 'Black Peril', passes for women, regulation of female employment - it should help to clarify the development of missionary attitudes.

The awareness that the churches had to attempt to come to terms with the growing presence of an urban African female population was shown in the 1912 Commission of the General Missionary Conference on 'Native Girls in Town'. Questionnaires were sent out asking for details of the numbers of African girls coming to the respondent's town annually to seek work, the kind of accommodation provided, church efforts to protect them from town temptations, the desirability of hostels, whether they should be

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8 See application forms in USPG Dossiers, 2285, Mrs. C. M. Jones; 2292, Amy Kent; 2759, Mary Phillips; 1562, Frances Chilton.

organised as Labour Bureaux and Domestic Training Schools and 'what would be the attitude of the better class natives themselves to such Institutions?' As complete demoralisation, in the Commission's opinion, threatened urban African girls, which in turn menaced the white population, the Conference resolved to 'urge upon the Government and Municipalities of our large towns, particularly those of Johannesburg and Kimberley, the establishment of Homes under the management of Christian ladies, assisted by Christian Native women, where Native girls may be received and cared for'. Such homes were especially desirable for country girls seeking employment and it was hoped that initial African suspicions would be overcome so that they would 'gradually become more popular with the better class of Natives'.[9]

By this time, the 'Black Peril' argument in favour of female domestic servants was being revived with greater force as the increasing number of outrages on white women, especially on the Rand, was attributed at least in part to the 'houseboy' system. However, the many testimonies to the White Peril 'which has long overshadowed this country' as Olive Schreiner wrote, and 'exists for all dark-skinned women at the hands of white men',[10] meant that, were it even possible to find enough females to end the 'houseboy' system, the employment of African girls on any considerable scale might be even more dangerous. The Conference concluded that, for the protection of their own honour, white employers should shoulder

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9 Report of the Proceedings of the Fourth General Missionary Conference of South Africa (Cape Town, 1912), 107-8; 27, 75.

10 Cory Library, MS 14 847, General Missionary Conference of South Africa; 4th, Cape Town, 1912, Commission VI - "The Black Peril". Letters, O. Schreiner to J. Henderson, 26 Dec. 1911. The Black Peril scare is explored in depth in Van Onselen, 'Witches', which also charts the founding of St. Agnes.

responsibility for protecting their servants' honour:

> We are of opinion that the price to be paid to secure a trustworthy class of Native female servants is arrangement for their accommodation within the houses of their employers under conditions which are healthy and which afford them protection from being led into evil.[11]

The Government's Commission investigating the assaults also concluded that only African women could be an effective substitute for the 'houseboy' and for a considerable supply, help in finding a place to stay and an employer should be provided. This again meant hostels.

> Most Natives have a strong and rooted objection to the word "Hostel", which in their mind is connected with the pass office (to which they seem to have an unfortunate aversion), and which they regard as a sort of prison. The term "Home" should therefore be employed, and the use and advantage of such an institution should be explained and published in the native languages and made widely known.[12]

Most missionaries (like most black men) were never happy with the relative freedom of the urban African woman or girl from patriarchal or official restraint, but in attempting to suggest some form of control for moral reasons, they burnt their fingers more than once on African hostility at any undue compulsion to be applied to their womenfolk. Early in 1912, when special night passes for black women were mooted for Johannesburg, the Transvaal Missionary Association (TMA) indicated its approval; this was a needed check on women 'who loiter in the streets for evil purposes', and it was a 'positive danger to coloured and native women to be in the streets of Johannesburg after 9 p.m.' The TMA also suggested the standard safeguards for young girls: hostels and, 'with a view to their obtaining

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11 Fourth GMC, 94.

12 Union of South Africa, Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into assaults on Women (1913), 27-8.

employment in respectable homes...the formation of Labour Bureaux'. A mass meeting of African women passed resolutions opposing these schemes.[13]

Other blueprints, similarly linking hostels and labour bureaux, emerged during World War I. This was a time of increasing missionary concern about African urban housing, and the breakdown of parental authority and marital stability. They pronounced passes for women to be 'altogether undesirable', no doubt largely because of the vociferous objections of the black women of the Orange Free State in 1913. But Anglican women did suggest 'that no native girl shall be allowed to leave her kraal to go into town without a letter from her parents, chief or missionary, giving her permission to do so', and that this letter be shown before she could buy a railway ticket. However, the Diocesan Board of Missions declared this 'coercive and impracticable'.[14] The suggested 'letter' was indeed potentially a travelling pass.

These schemes were the reflection of missionary awareness of changed urban conditions: the total female urban African population increased by some 50 per cent between 1911 and 1921, while African male numbers grew by only 7 per cent.[15] It was in the post-war years that women really began to replace men as domestic servants. Furthermore, the unattached, wage-earning African female, a new phenomenon, was clearly going to be an

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13 Report...8th Annual Conference...Transvaal Missionary Association 1912 (n.p.), 29-31. The Anglicans, however, were strongly against passes: USPG, E, Mrs. Jones, 1911.

14 CPSA, AB 767, Pretoria Diocesan Board of Missions, Minutes 26 April 1915, 7 Nov. 1917.

15 H. J. Simons, African Women. Their Legal Status in South Africa (London, 1968), 278. Of course, in absolute terms the number of males was usually at least double. The female increase for 1921-36 was even higher, at 142 per cent.

increasingly common figure on the urban scene. Hence the post-war efforts at hostel establishment.

In 1919 the American Board started the Helping Hand Club for Native Girls in Hans Street, Fairview, providing hostel accommodation and general recreational facilities. The moving spirit in this venture was Mrs. Clara Bridgman. The Wesleyan Methodists felt pressured in the early 1920's by the Anglican and American Board examples, into actually executing their plans for a women's hostel, first mooted in 1916 for a site at Village Main, but pursued thus far with little success, because of the slenderness of resources and competing needs. However, the late start meant endless difficulties with the authorities over a central freehold site. Potential sites in Jeppe and Troyeville were unusable because of colour clauses, while another alternative, Ferreirastown, was, as a notorious illicit liquor area, 'a very undesirable neighbourhood wherein to seek to develop a decent ideal of native life'. The site finally purchased in President Street in 1924, the Methodists' fifth atttempt, was vetoed by the City Council, which refused to pass the plans in view of the great outcry against African girls being housed in the town. It was only in 1934, after a former Primitive Methodist site in Wolhuter had become available through the union of the Methodist Churches, that a Methodist Hostel was started, with due plans and permission.[16]

Private hostels for women featured as a part of a complex plan put forward in March 1925 by the Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives, on which the three key missions of this study were prominently represented. It aimed to deal with the uncontrolled influx of unattached

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16 MMS 840, Burnet to Haigh 13 Sept. 1916; 841, Goodwin to Burnet, 11 Aug. 1920; 842, Bottrill to Burnet, 11 and 23 July, 1923; 1052, Allcock to Miss Bradford, 20 Nov. 1924, 18 Feb. 1925; 844, Allcock to Ayre, 28 Feb. 1934.

African women to town and to curb immorality and illicit liquor selling without reintroducing passes for African women. Again, it was accorded a hostile reception by educated Africans.[17] The desirability of hostels continued to be propagated, at Missionary and European-Bantu Conferences in the 1920's by Mrs. Bridgman and Mrs. Rheinallt Jones particularly, successive Presidents of the Helping Hand Club.[18] Hostels persist as a theme in white women's Christian endeavours into the late 1930's, although chiefly, it would appear, as a pious hope.[19]

As the 1920's progressed, the white suburbs of Johannesburg spread further northwards, which decreased the utility to domestic servants of existing hostels, all near the town centre, especially as the numbers requiring safe housing and recreational facilities was growing. The logical step was the provision of suburban hostels nearer the place of work, but missionaries and liberals were quite unable to overcome the conviction of ratepayers that such places would cause a depreciation in property values. The Helping Hand Club had had similar problems, but as Mrs. Bridgman explained with evident satisfaction, local white women had come to realise its usefulness:

> The neighbours over the hedge circulated a petition against this "awful Kafir slum". The Ratepayers Association held stormy meetings of protest...

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17 See Gaitskell, 'Christian Compounds', 53-4.

18 C. Bridgman, 'Social and Medical work for Native women and girls in urban areas', Report of the Seventh General Missionary Conference (Lovedale, 1928), 62-5. Fifth National European-Bantu Conference. Bloemfontein...1933. Report. (Johannesburg), 78-9.

19 WUL, South African Council of Churches Papers, AC 623/17/4, Christian Council of South Africa, Minutes of Executive Meeting, 14 Oct. 1936, 5 July 1938; Minutes of Second Council Meeting, 21 Jan. 1937.

> Nearly every one of the hundred women who signed that petition have had a girl from the Helping Hand at one time or another.[20]

The northern suburbs were to prove more resilient. A woman approached Bishop Karney in 1924 with her proposals for a hostel, which were backed by the Medical Officer of Health and a local doctor, only to find, Karney wrote, that the 'hard-faced' neighbourhood housewives (it appears to have been in Orange Grove) were 'violently and rigidly against it'. Nearly every speaker at the packed public meeting in the suburb opposed the idea, insisting that the proponents 'were trying to establish a Native Location among them'. Karney was frank: 'I told them over and over again that we were only catering for their own needs, but it hadn't the slightest effect.'

In 1928 a plot of land was bought near Orchards for a similar effort, but again the upshot was a rowdy meeting and failure: for three hours, Karney 'faced a crowd shouting "Not in Norwood"'. Racial prejudice and property interests were clearly too strong in that era of intensifying urban segregation, though Karney considered there was 'room for twenty Buxton Street Hostels instead of one'.[21]

b) Servants' Registries and Domestic Science Training

As demonstrated, a regular feature of missionary outlines for the protection of African women in town was the suggestion of 'Labour Bureaux'. Helping servants find work became an increasingly important task of the Johannesburg hostels in the 1930's. The Anglicans had done this on a small scale from the inception of their institution; in 1916, for example, 117 girls applied for work and about thirty proved suitable. One missionary

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20 Report Seventh GMC, 65.

21 USPG, E, Bishop Karney, 11 Feb 1925 (filed 1924); WUL, CPSA, AB 838, Karney newsletter, 19 April 1928; USPG, D, Karney to Waddy, 23 March 1932.

from the Transkei expounded on the mutual benefit to employer and servants of such a policy:

> In order to safeguard the employers and encourage industrious Natives, a bureau in each place would be of the greatest use, where Natives trained for domestic service could be registered and the standards of wages fixed, so that dishonest, impertinent and "slack" servants could no longer easily get work as at present, while those of good conduct and experience could depend on earning an increasing wage. In this way an incentive to good work would be provided while employers would be guarded from having to take on anyone.

The towns would get 'a class of respectable, industrious Natives, happy in domestic service'. This approach is reminiscent of Harrison's interesting assertion that the Girls' Friendly Society, by raising overall sexual standards, by making virtue feasible through its network of lodges, clubs and benefits, and by improving the status of domestic service, wanted to consolidate a female working class elite.[22]

As an example of incentives offered to 'industrious Natives', one might cite the 'character books' with a photograph and other particulars 'as a protection to the girls of good character', which the Society of Women Missionaries proposed to introduce, although in the end, only letters of recommendation were sent to the mistresses.[23] On the other side of the balance sheet, the Anglican Johannesburg missionaries, in seeking 'situations', in the 1930's at least, did check on accommodation, amount of work and wages, thereby hoping to ensure suitable standards for the servants whom they assisted. From 1930-1935, the Doornfontein Hostel

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22 CPSA, AB 767, Pretoria Diocesan Board of Missions, Report, 1916; SWM Journal (Sept. 1917), 14-15; B. Harrison, 'For Church', 124.

23 SWM Journal (March 1921), 5; (Oct. 1921), 8.

worked in cooperation with the Helping Hand Club in running a domestic servant placement service, producing a joint handbill to advertise the fact. Both charged a 5/- booking fee to mistresses (valid for three months) and insisted on references from the prospective servant. The Anglicans kept their Registry Office open four hours a day, and to it girls could apply for work.[24]

The Helping Hand Club had placed over 700 girls in domestic service by 1928; the following year, 240 servants were placed in response to 460 applications from white women; in 1930-31, the Club could only supply 316 girls when 650 were asked for. This was indicative of the growing demand for competent female servants, itself a reflection of the burgeoning Johannesburg white population, its lower masculinity ratio and its rising expectations as regards standards of housewifery. These girls for whom jobs were found, were mostly non-residents. Then, in 1930, the Club started a small training school, offering a short intensive course in order 'to turn out every year some fifteen girls carefully trained in practical housework under earnest Christian influences'. This venture shared key elements of the Anglican hostel's rationale: to equip African girls for the role which white society assigned them, and to strike a mutually beneficial bargain between servants and employers:

> The principle underlying the training is as far as possible the original one which inspired the opening of the hostel - the desire to fit the girls for this new phase of changing conditions in their lives. /However an attempt was made/... not only to teach the girls a livelihood, but to recognise that any true Christian education must include some introduction to ideas and

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24 SWM Journal (Aug. 1934), 6; The Helping Hand Club for Native Girls Report (1930-1).

> activities which will lift above immediate drudgery.
>
> We hope to help to solve the difficult problem of servants for the conscientious housewives who will give care and safe-housing if they can secure efficient, reliable maids.

The club was anxious for its servants to fulfil their obligations; as Mrs. Rheinallt Jones explained, one of the things it tried to impress on its girls in training was 'that they must be as responsible about due notice as the male servants who have to have passes'.[25]

The Matron of the Methodist Hostel was receiving more enquiries for girls in mid-1935 then she could place: although a suggestion was made that the Hostel should train girls as the Helping Hand Club did,[26] the Methodists' operation did not rise to such ambitious heights. Nevertheless, both Anglicans and Methodists were equipping African girls for housewifery-related employment. The idea owed a good deal to pressure from African Christians, and what finally emerged in each case was a fairly prestigious boarding school under white teachers, all other mission education for girls being in black hands. The Methodist Domestic Science School at Kilnerton, which opened in 1929, was three-quarters paid for by the Manyano. By 1942, the School had seventy-five pupils, the maximum it could cope

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25 Report Seventh GMC, 65; Helping Hand Club Reports (1928-9, 1930-1); Leeds Public Library Archives, AT/C43, Clara Bridgman to E. Little, 17 Sept. 1930. (I owe this material from the Arthington Trust Papers to Brian Willan); AT/C130, Newsletter from Clara Bridgman, 6 April 1931; WUL, SAIRR, RJC, Mrs. E. B. Jones to Margaret Hlubi, 30 Nov. 1934.

26 Minute Book of Native Girls' Hostel, Wolhuter, Johannesburg, 18 Oct. 1935. I am grateful to Rev. E. E. Mahabane for making this and some other records of the hostel available to me from the Albert Street Methodist Church.

with (having had to turn some away), but very few were still on a purely domestic science course; a combination of the practical skills with some teaching subjects was proving more useful, bound to secure the girls a school post, and of more value in married life than the purely academic subjects.[27]

In the Anglican case, Deaconess Julia was made aware of the need of a school 'by Christian parents who were most anxious to obtain for their girls the advantage of a better training than could be gained in the little day-schools, where the teachers being always men there was little opportunity for the girls to learn such things as should fit them either for domestic service or to improve their own houses in the future.'[28] She started with sixteen boarders in April 1908 and in 1909 the Industrial School, St. Agnes, moved to new premises in Rosettenville, which was then out in the country south of Johannesburg, and became the C.R. headquarters from 1911.

The 'refined' head teacher, Rowena Oslar, had a stormy time initially putting her ideas of discipline and good behaviour into practice in the face of 'Flagrant lying, pilfering, cheating, dirty habits, falsely-accusing and indecent posturing', not to mention what appeared to her as work-shy pretentiousness:

> They come to "College" - as they love to call the school - with extraordinary ideas as to what is proper to do in "College": picking up wood for fire, digging and hoeing mealies, sweeping and scrubbing, washing up, or laundry work - all of which they have to do at home, are at times fiercely resented when demanded at school. Then too, having come into contact usually with only the lowest kind of white civilization, there is much to be unlearned before we can get on. High-heeled shoes, low-cut blouses,

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27 Allcock Papers, Doris (Cartwright, Schoolhead) to Mrs. Allcock, 15 March [1942]; and see further Ch. 5 section c).

28 USPG, WW Original Reports Africa, Dss Julia, 1908.

> drabbled silk skirts, tawdry lace, hair in curling pin fashion and cheap finery have all to be warred against, before ideas of "nice-ness" can enter.[29]

Female industrial education had been a staple of late nineteenth century mission institutions. In addition, Miss Oslar and other early staff members at St. Agnes had previously taught working class children in British elementary schools, where textbooks tended to direct girls towards an exclusively domestic role, in her own home or someone else's. Domestic ideology fused with a cruder racism than was current among missionary women a decade or two later. Not only was 'the true education of the Native girl (at any rate)' with her 'hands, & eyes & ears, and a little of the brain', for the 'native's' brain was insufficiently developed for overmuch brainwork, but the barely literate teenage girls could at least 'all learn to clean, & cook, & sew, & be useful women when they leave school'.[30]

The School took in washing in the early days, just like penitentiaries did in England to augment income; but 1910 saw a 'fresh outburst of grumbling against laundry for "white people"' by a batch of rough older teenage girls, who all left the school within six months, saying they had to work too hard. After the withdrawals relationships improved with signs of courtesy, pride in work, trust and affection from the girls, many of whom were younger, more teachable, and more easily subordinated. By 1912, there were thirty girls at the school, who were prepared, from that year, for standard VI, with laundry, cookery and needlework classes in addition.

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29 Ibid., Miss Oslar, 1909.

30 Cock, Maids, Ch. 8; A. Davin, '"Mind that you do as you are told": reading books for Board School girls, 1870-1902', Feminist Review, 3 (1979); USPG, WW Letters Africa, R. Oslar to Miss Harris, 2 Jan. 1911; A. Kent to Miss Harris, 4 Sept. 1910.

These skills need not lead only to 'service'; the general ambition among the girls to own and know how to use a sewing machine must have been related to the possibilities opened up for independent seamstressing for private income, as well as personal dressmaking. But there were signs of individual success in 'service' too: one ex-pupil 'won her mistress' good opinion and talked so highly of the school that the lady came to tell us of her appreciation and express sympathy with our work'.[31]

Just as the Methodist School increasingly de-emphasised the domestic training for servants, so St. Agnes eventually outgrew its original purpose, amalgamating with St. Peter's School in the early 1920's, when Alban Winter C.R., took it over to advance boys' secondary education. This was a reflection of the rising aspirations and more prosperous circumstances of those African parents who had sent their daughters to boarding schools. As a result, St. Agnes became, by the 1930's, more of a boarding hostel for girls attending the secondary school, though it did have an Industrial Department offering training for less academic boarders, or those wanting to take domestic science for the Junior Certificate examination. Its pupils in the 1920's were mostly daughters of clergy and Church people 'who wish for better things', and tended to 'make fitting wives for educated native men' rather than become servants, but there were also some becoming nurses, teachers and even a nun at this time.[32]

Were missionaries, by teaching domestic skills, in fact giving

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31 USPG, WW Original Reports Africa, Miss Oslar, 1910; E, Miss Oslar, 1911.

32 USPG, E, May Brazier, 1931, 25 Jan 1933; O. Victor, A Large Room (London, 1925?), 17; After Twenty Years: 1922 Report of the Missionary Work of the Community of the Resurrection in the Southern Transvaal, 21.

servants an advantage in the labour market, or simply enabling white employers to get more and better work for less money? It does appear that Institution-trained girls could command a better wage. In 1932, according to one report, while the ordinary maid in Johannesburg might earn anything from £1.10 to £5, though generally between £2.10 and £3.10 per month, the institution graduate could bring in £3 to £4. This may have been a rather rosy picture, for a teacher at St. Agnes wrote in 1931 of two ex-pupils in 'exceptionally good places' who, after the three-year Domestic Science Course, received their uniform, board and lodging, and £2.10 and £2.15 respectively a month.[33]

There was certainly a growing demand for qualified servants discernable as the 1930's progressed. In 1939 the Helping Hand Club's training school was full to overflowing, and situations were easily found for all who finished the course, the Superintendent receiving 'many letters and expressions of appreciation from mistresses'. In 1942-3, the Club received over two hundred requests for trained servants while, as the Registry no longer operated, it only had ten to place. It could find jobs for fifty well-trained girls a month, especially as cooks and nursemaids, but was only able to train thirty-five at a time, at the most. (The school closed in 1945 because of staffing difficulties).[34]

Missionaries, in sheltering, training and 'placing' African women servants, were obviously helping to oil the domestic wheels of white society. In the face of opposition, as in the attempts to start hostels in the northern suburbs, church leaders were eager to prove their utility

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33 South African Outlook (Jan. 1932), 8; USPG, E, May Brazier, 1931.

34 Helping Hand Club Reports (1939-40, 1942-3, 1944-5).

to fellow whites, but they might well have argued in this fashion for convenience or effect, without regarding it as their prime motivation. The hostels undeniably offered a service to African women, which they were mostly happy to avail themselves of. However, the mediation of the missionaries would appear to have been the most 'disinterested' in the two less flourishing hostels. The Helping Hand Club, the largest and best equipped, was, perhaps partly because its interdenominational committee of prominent Johannesburg wives reinforced its links with dominant groups in the city, the most energetic in increasing its usefulness to whites.

c) African Attitudes towards Church Hostels

Interesting glimpses of the type of African women who stayed in the three Johannesburg hostels over the years can be gleaned from the records. In each, there was a core of permanent residents and a fluctuating, but initially much larger number of 'casuals' who stayed for a few days while seeking work, or just wanted a bed for the night. By the 1940's, the Church hostels could accommodate double the number in the Municipal Women's Hostel: the Methodists and the Anglicans could take about sixty each and the Helping Hand Club some 115, although the beginnings had been more modest - during World War I, the Anglicans had room for twelve, from 1929 for thirty-four, while the Helping Hand Club accommodated fifty in 1930.[35]

The Anglican women missionaries found initially that the very people for whom the hostel was intended, the adolescent girls in the

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35 Hostel Reports, passim.

greatest moral danger, were staying away, at first because those who had run away from home to come to town would not care for the 'slight' restraint of missionary protection. During the war years, they were being kept away by the irksome rules (they had to be in by 9 p.m. and help keep their own bedding and the hostel clean) and by the 'old women who sought a peaceful refuge' there and were 'selfish' and made it 'unpleasant' for the girls. Many of these were 'respectable middle-aged women who come up from the Cape to work, and are perfectly horrified at the sordid conditions of the yards'. Only when the older women were turned out, did the younger ones gradually come, no doubt recruited partly through the cards advertising the hostel displayed on eight Johannesburg and Reef stations, or the advertisements inserted in a few issues of Imvo and the Christian Express.[36]

In the 1930's, while the Anglican Hostel Warden continued to deplore the fecklessness and excessive liberty of female servants,[37] she insisted, 'It is a better type of girl who comes to our Hostel, who wants a place of safety and comfort, where she can feel at home and where she can receive her friends.'[38] In other words, the bold, 'loose' girls whom the black press described as 'playing ladish', were still not being reached by this philanthropy originally designed for them.

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36 USPG, E, Mrs. Jones, 1911; CPSA, AB767, Pretoria Diocesan Board of Missions, Report, 1916; USPG, E, A. M. Kent, 1918; SWM Journal (Sept. 1917), 6 (Oct. 1921), 8.

37 'Whilst Native boys are hedged around with passes of various kinds, there is no class so free as the Native girl, who, alas, has not been trained to use her freedom aright.' USPG, E, Agnes Beale, 1935.

38 USPG, E, A. Beale, 1934. Each of the hostels allowed residents to have visitors in the common rooms in the evenings and over weekends. 'Playing ladish' is discussed in Ch. 3, section b).

The Helping Hand Club's Mrs. Bridgman found likewise 'that girls who are leading lives of sin cannot long endure the atmosphere of uplift and purposefulness, which emanates from a place like this'.[39]

Although most of the residents of the Methodist Hostel in the 1930's were also servants, some of them were supporting themselves by sewing and knitting. Round 1930, the women and girls staying at the Helping Hand Club were a mixture of Xhosa, Zulu and Sotho in about equal numbers, with a few Pondo and Mfengu, while the occupational breakdown showed three teachers, two seamstresses and thirty charwomen and general servants.[40] News items about the hostel residents - a birthday celebration, a tea party - featured from time to time in the social columns of the African press in the 1930's, and many of the women probably shared the aura of diligent respectability which surrounded those servants who wrote letters to the newspapers.[41]

The attitude of African women towards the hostels changed from initial suspicion in each case to real enthusiasm by the 1950's, when applicants were often daily turned away; by then many among the growing female town population, especially the educated, were desperate for the security and facilities which the hostels offered. The element of control did cause friction, as was evident in African opposition to missionary schemes involving hostels. The Pretoria Anglican hostel had to battle against African prejudice that it was '"too much like prison",....and still that cry can be heard today!' The fierceness of the Methodist Hostel

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39 IMC 1231, File 'Education of Women and Girls', Mrs. Bridgman, 'Observations arising from the study of the papers of Dr. A. G. Fraser and Miss Mabel Shaw'.

40 Transvaal Methodist (Feb. 1936); Helping Hand Club Reports (1928-9, 1930-1).

41 See over.

Matron (not a missionary) caused tensions in the early years, as she struggled to get the girls to help her with cleaning, was unbending if they came back after closing time and tried to force three who refused to take work, to leave. In the 1940's the Helping Hand Club Superintendent (also a non-missionary), having made herself unpopular because of repressive regulations, received letters containing veiled threats of poisoning and was awakened in the middle of the night by anonymous phone calls. But these do seem to have been among the exceptions. Generally more amicable relations existed.[42]

The hostel ethos found support among those who favoured cooperation with whites, Selby Msimang and Umteteli advocating their encouragement. Social workers Charlotte Maxeke and Violet Makanya, cultivated by the Joneses and Mrs. Bridgman, likewise warmly advocated hostels like the Helping Hand Club. By contrast, Makanya criticised the government hostels in Natal for their frequent lack of distinction between 'raw girls' and 'educated...clean, respectable girls', for to be 'huddled together with six strange girls of every description' and with smelly cow-hide petticoats, was 'very repulsive to a cultured girl from our Seminaries'.[43]

Hostels clearly had an appeal for 'respectable' African women, as an approving letter from a Rustenburg lady who had spent the night in the

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41 Umteteli wa Bantu, 14 Jan. 1932 in 'Reef Gossip'; Bantu World, 14 Sept. 1935; and see examples in Ch. 3, section b).

42 Some account of the Work of the Church in the Diocese of Pretoria (Pamphlet, 1934?); Minute Book of Native Girls Hostel, 23 Aug., 20 Sept. 1935; R. E. Phillips, The Crux of the Race Problem. Are Black People Human Beings (Stellenbosch, 1947).

43 Umteteli wa Bantu, 27 Dec. 1924, 14 March 1925, 20 Aug. 1927; Maxeke, 'Social Conditions', Christian Students and Modern South Africa, 116; V. S. Makanya, 'The Problem of the Zulu Girl', Native Teachers' Journal (April 1931), 118-9.

Pretoria hostel testifies:

> I felt very proud of the Hostel girls' life. They are indeed saved from the Amalaitas and rude boys who always like to disturb the poor innocent girls in their rooms.
>
> The matron of the Hostel does not allow the girls to speak any unkind word, whatever they say is yes, darling; no, darling or Dumela Morategi and so on.

Douglas Zulu's winning entry in an essay competition in Umteteli in 1924 showed, in its advocacy of wholesome leisure, safe housing and suitable social contacts, how quickly missionary principles had been accepted and internalised by those who wanted to be 'respectable', 'progressive' urbanites. He warned an imaginary country cousin, coming to Johannesburg for the first time, to stay in the hostel at the Helping Hand Club.

> An auntie of mine...stays at the Club and she will put you in the way of things...On taking up service see if the room provided for your own use is inside your mistress' dwelling house; do not, under any circumstances, accept an outhouse near the kitchen boy's but rather put up at the Hostel...Use your spare time in some sensible occupation, preferably at the Club...Good music, educative lectures and pictures, social and religious gatherings are all good and uplifting, but in attending these use your common sense and pick your companions carefully because on this particular point of company might be your undoing...Keep in as close touch with all Christian activities as you have done at home; then with your hands so full of work the Devil will have to display his "situations vacant" column to someone else.[44]

The hostels had always aimed to do more than merely provide a place to sleep. In all three, there were usually daily prayers and a week-night service, often taken by an African minister, while the girls were urged to attend their own church on Sunday. None of the hostels ever restricted residence to girls of a particular denomination, although there

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44 Bantu World, 16 Sept. 1933 (from A. Mokgatle); Umteteli wa Bantu, 26 Jan. 1924.

seems to have been little success in attracting non-Christian girls. The Anglicans ran weekly cookery classes in the 1930's, but the girls were too tired and had too little time after their day's work to care for games or regular evening classes. Red Cross courses were popular there, and at the Helping Hand Club into the 1960's. These courses were open to non-residents, as was the Clubroom at the Helping Hand, for the hostel wardens were anxious to reach out to the hundreds more servants on whom their relatively small efforts were making no impact. The hostels also provided a central meeting place for groups like the Bantu Trained Nurses Association, the Women's Help Society and the Council of European and African Women.[45]

Church hostels for African women in Johannesburg never succeeded in establishing themselves on the large scale that was hoped for in the 1920's. Partly this was for financial reasons; even the three hostels which were founded, became heavily dependent on municipal and government grants-in-aid. Secondly, compounds for men were a business proposition, serving the needs of capitalism which demanded large concentrations of strictly disciplined labour. The diffusion of the African female domestic labour force was more convenient for white employers, to most of whom safe housing, religious guidance and social amenities for their servants were not a priority.

The Anglican, Methodist and American Board women's hostels were of a piece with other missionary efforts at inter-racial mediation in the inter-war period on the Reef. They encapsulate the ambivalence of extending a 'helping hand' to both white employer and black servant. That

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45 SWM Journal (April 1936), 15; St. Martin's Hostel for Native Girls Doornfontein. Report for the year ended 30 June 1945.

both parties were female embodied a further contradiction. Women missionaries, typical of their time, considered women's place to be in the home. Yet they gave housework training to black women who, because of widespread premarital pregnancy and the poverty of urban African families, might well have to continue working as servants after motherhood or marriage. The teaching of housewifery was meant both 'to improve the servants of the rich, and the wives of the poor'.[46] But, in a further twist of intention, as some of the poor raised their social position and their aspirations, their daughters were no longer prepared to learn at school how to be servants. Finally, like the associations set up to guard the premarital chastity of young Christian women,[47] hostels were unable to make a substantial impact on changing sexual behaviour.[48] They provide, though, yet another pointer to the centrality of this issue in the concerns of churchwomen.

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46 Alexander, 'Women's Work', 62, quoting an advocate of industrial education for British working girls in the 1850's. On this issue, see also my paper, 'Housewives, Maids or Mothers: Some Contradictions of Domesticity for Christian Women in Johannesburg', SOAS Conference on the History of the Family in Africa, Sept. 1981.

47 See Ch. 5, section b).

48 See the laments of two St. Agnes teachers on the tendency of ex-pupils to become pregnant while in domestic service: USPG, E, May Brazier, 2 Jan. 1934; Frances Chilton, 28 Jan. 1935.

CHAPTER 7

SUNDAY SCHOOLS AND WAYFARERS

a) Supplements to Mission Education

Schools were from the outset an inevitable adjunct of virtually all Protestant mission work in Africa, because Bible study demanded literacy. Most African education in South Africa, though increasingly dependent on state funds for teacher training and salaries, remained in missionary hands until 1953, but it began to lose its direct role in Christian conversion quite early on as Africans, forced to look for labour with white employers, perceived the usefulness of English and arithmetic. Scholars acquired an often nominal Christianity and it was hoped that they would retain their links with the Christian community into full church membership. While some African parents and teachers chafed under church control for the couple of decades prior to the assumption of full state control of education, it was in these years particularly that mission education became increasingly sophisticated, secularised, standardised and professionalised, to the concern of the more evangelistically minded. Were they not giving education and economic and social factors more attention than evangelisation, James Dexter Taylor asked the General Missionary Conference in 1925. 'Is it not true that even in our schools the least definite, most haphazard part of education is the training in religion and morals?' In the mid-thirties, it was no less evident that 'the aridity of religious education in the schools caused great anxiety'; worship and religious instruction were deemed inadequate and unreal, sterile in influencing personal and community life. Some observers pointed to the secularising effect of Western civilisation, while others blamed the school-teachers, 'the poverty of whose spiritual and

intellectual equipment was deplored'.[1]

Partly in order to counter this religious deterioration, there emerged on the Reef and in other mission areas two important supplements to the influence of the school: Sunday schools and Christian youth movements. The former were, like their predecessors in Britain and America, co-educational, the latter separated the sexes; but in both Sunday schools and the youth movement for girls, women missionaries often had a dominant role, and almost always a woman involved in the one was also a leader in the other. Both types of youth work hoped by more informal and pleasurable methods to impart or reinforce Christian teaching; the uniformed movements also offered healthy recreation and useful skills. It is noteworthy that, by and large, recruitment to both came through the schools, and it was generally school teachers who provided the leadership, under white supervision. Contemporary social commentators remarked on the ample provision of leisure activities for African school children, especially by comparison with the non-attending majority which churches and social agencies hardly reached.[2] Thus, a minority of African children received through these new institutions an intensified exposure to Christian social and spiritual education, as the influence of the school was supplemented weekly first by the Sunday school and later by Pathfinders for boys and Wayfarers and Sunbeams for girls. In this way, despite the secularising forces which were particularly strong in the cities, the Christian culture first transmitted to small groups through rudimentary rural schools and Sunday Scripture classes, was passed on to younger generations.

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1 Report of the Sixth General Missionary Conference of South Africa (Cape Town, 1925), 23; E. G. Malherbe (ed.), Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society (Cape Town, 1937), 495.

2 Phillips, Bantu in the City, 292, 310; Hellmann, Problems, 44.

The Marxist verdict on British Sunday schools has not been favourable: they were actively used in the Midlands 'to discipline the new child labour force in the factories'; they committed 'psychological atrocities' on children by an indoctrination in their sinfulness and an extolling of duty, obedience, industry and Sunday observance which amounted to 'religious terrorism'. By contrast, Laqueur argues that Sunday schools, with their membership of over two million by 1850, were a central and authentic feature of working class life: 'Attended entirely by the working classes, staffed largely by former students and their parents, often managed and financed by the community which it served, the Sunday school was a part of, and not an imposition on to, popular culture'. Against those who see the Sunday school as a manipulative device to produce conduct suited to the needs of capital, he counters that

> Honesty, orderliness, punctuality, hard work and refinement of manners and morals may all have been congruent with the industrial system and thus in the interest of the bourgeoisie but they were not therefore middle class values.

However, here Laqueur fails to grapple with the question of the internalisation by workers of ideology convenient to employers, or that very duality of Methodism as religion of exploiter and exploited which Thompson is at such pains to explore.[3]

On the Rand, Sunday schools and Christian youth movements made their appearance within a decade of each other or even, in the Methodist Church, got going in earnest in the same year (1925-6). But in Britain, the two came a century apart. The Boys Brigade was founded in 1883 but, along with its imitators, was eclipsed from 1907-8 by the runaway success of Baden

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3 Compare J. O. Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution (London, 1974), 28, and E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (Pelican, rev. ed. 1968), 412-415, with T. W. Laqueur, Religion and Respectability. Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture

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Powell's Boy Scouts. The new religious importance of converting the adolescent was one input into the Brigade movement. Another was the new acceptability of Christian militarism, with its martial imagery and accoutrements for spiritual experiences and organisation (as in the Salvation Army); secular military influence was also crucial, especially in the Scouts. The middle class fear of the militancy and discontent of the urban poor, and their hope of class conciliation, acted as a further stimulus, for frequently these were movements for working class teenagers run by middle class, middle-aged adults. Compassion, social conscience and pleasure at working with children fed in as well. Again, the verdict of historical research in Britain is that the normative values stressed by the Brigades and later by Scouts were likely to appeal to the upwardly aspiring: 'sobriety, thrift, self-help, punctuality, obedience'.[4]

Winifred Grant commented in 1930 on the recent widening of the scope of missionary activities on the Reef. First male converts had been organised, then women, then 'almost before one was aware of it the children were here in great numbers, crowded together in the yards and slums of downtown Johannesburg', and this had necessitated school expansion and youth work.[5] The successive stages of mission work corresponding to the

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1780-1850 (New Haven and London, 1976), xi-xii, 239.

4 J. Springhall, Youth, Empire and Society. British Youth Movements 1883-1940 (London, 1977), 40, also 13-19; K. Heasman, Evangelicals in Action (London, 1962), 107-112; O. Anderson, 'The growth of Christian militarism in mid-Victorian Britain', English Historical Review, LXXXVI (Jan. 1971).

5 Transvaal Methodist (March 1930), 18.

demographic shifts in the Reef's African population, are as marked as this simple observation implies. In the 1890's, churches either turned from white to African congregations or started offshoots of rural work in the city for their black male members; the interest in African women was particularly lively between 1905 and 1914; and children started becoming important during and after World War I.

The number of African children under fifteen on the Reef increased fivefold between 1921 and 1936, from some 16,000 to nearly 80,000, with Johannesburg providing just under half each total.[6] The most important contact which the churches had with a proportion of these children, about a third in 1937, was through the mission-controlled schools. Pupil numbers shot up from 10,901 in 1929 to 18,244 in 1936, of whom just over half came from Johannesburg. It was in these years that the Roman Catholic numbers began to outstrip the American Board's, but the Methodists and Anglicans retained undoubted numerical predominance. Together with the ABM, they supervised two-thirds of all African school children on the Rand in 1935.[7] Despite such educational expansion, however, one cannot argue simply from these figures to the supplementary approaches adopted by the leading churches towards children in the 1920's and 1930's. In the case of the American Board, Sunday schools often preceded day schools, and with all three missions, once schools were established, the two sets of institutions, formal and informal, were intended to be mutually reinforcing. Further, not only was the exposure to mission educational

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6 Union of South Africa, Third Census...1921, Part VIII. Non-European Races (Pretoria, 1924), Table 7, and Sixth Census...5th May, 1936. Ages and Marital Condition of the Bantu Population, Table 3.

7 Phillips, Bantu in the City, 152-4.

influence fairly short, except for a minority of a minority, but the education received was very rudimentary for the most part. In 1935 for instance, nearly two-thirds of the Reef African scholars were in the sub-standards, with only a tenth of the children in classes beyond Std. III.[8]

Traditionally in the countryside, once children reached the age of seven or so, they began working at tasks which were appropriate to their sex, and developed pastimes and forms of play to enliven them. The young boys were out all day herding cattle while the girls were occupied with domestic tasks round the homestead.[9] On the Reef, the tasks and amusements of children changed under the influence of adult economic activity. Children were set to mind younger brothers and sisters, or sent off to collect or return washing for laundress mothers, while teenage daughters frequently helped with beer brewing and selling, performing a useful service in luring additional customers. Games reflected these new urban duties: the favourite pastime of little girls in Rooiyard was make-believe beer-brewing. They would mix a few grains with water in a small tin and sell it to the little boys who played at being customers. Teenage girls in the mid-1930's, if they had left school, tended to spend their time visiting one another at home, doing household chores, and possibly some knitting or crochet, whereas boys were more likely to be out on the streets, gambling or smoking dagga. Marabi dances were a great attraction, and though parents made more effort to supervise daughters, it was usually possible for girls to get away at night, despite prohibitions, just as Martha does in The Marabi Dance, and gain the forbidden sexual experience.[10]

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8 Phillips, Bantu in the City, 169, 155.

9 D. Kidd, Savage Childhood (London, 1906), 161-219.

10 Hellmann, Rooiyard, 66, 77-8, Problems, 51.

For some urban African children several years, and for many at least a couple of years while they were growing up were spent attending school, however desultorily. For the three missions, it seemed logical to direct additional spiritual and social efforts at this captive audience, already organised in local groupings with familiar authority figures (teachers) available to take subsidiary responsibility; it provided the skeleton of a Reef-wide leadership structure which would have been much more difficult to build up from scratch without the schools. White male missionaries took administrative responsibility for their schools, but the teaching staffs were African except at St. Peter's, Rosettenville. Women missionaries had perhaps a closer personal link with Reef church schools, especially with the girls and their teachers, through the regular supervision of needlework which was required for the government grant. This was a somewhat anachronistic continuation of their nineteenth century role of sewing instruction, stripped now of its religious significance in providing the outer garments for the inwardly converted.

Of the three missions, it was the Anglicans who started sewing classes on the Reef earliest, in 1905. By 1932, Coelia Parker was visiting thirty schools for sewing and had contact with fifty teachers as a result. The spiritual counselling of the staff had assumed a new importance: it was as vital for her to have the confidence of the teachers as of the girls, for she assisted in retreats and conferences to help the teachers realise their vocation.[11] The American Board started school sewing round 1915. Through the 1920's until her retrenchment in 1934, it was Alice Weir's proud responsibility. Mrs. Taylor, another former dressmaker, then took charge, but by 1938 Dora Phillips single-handedly supervised sewing in eight schools,

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11 USPG, E, Karney, 1932; D, C. Parker to Miss Morgan, 25 Jan. (1933).

providing the material and cutting it out for some 500 girls, hard work which she nevertheless enjoyed.[12] From 1930, Florence Brown, similarly equipped with dressmaking experience, visited six Methodist schools for sewing each week. In her last years in this job, during World War II, she would visit her thousand girls 120 times a year.[13] Needlework classes tied in well with the other reponsibilities of female missionaries towards pupils.

b) Sunday Schools

The American Board missionaries pioneered Sunday schools, which was somewhat ironic, as the Board never really rooted itself in family congregations and residential areas until the end of this period, and then it was partly as a consequence of this youth work. Its endeavours were mostly among males in the gold-mining compounds. The Board's church in Doornfontein was a potential nucleus for a town congregation of men, women and children, but a large part of the membership seceded in 1917 under the pastor, Rev. Gardner Mvuyana. However, Mrs. Bridgman had already made headway with the children of Doornfontein. Close to the church were 'blocks of rooms let to native women of bad character. These are simply dens of drink and vice'. Not for the last time in a situation where adults appeared morally reprobate and unreachable, the 'line of least resistance seemed to be with the children'. Mrs. Bridgman started a Sunday school for them in 1913 and built up membership by persistent visiting of families. (Detectives shadowed her closely for some time, thinking her an illicit liquor seller). A small day school opened soon after. By 1915 Mrs. Bridgman

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12 ABC: 15.4 v.43, Taylor's Johannesburg Reports 1934-5, R. Phillips, 'Report - Johannesburg Social Work 1937-1938'.

13 Interview, F. Brown, 6 Oct. 1977; Transvaal Methodist Synod Minutes, 'Witwatersrand Methodist Native Mission. Report of Social Worker Miss Florence Brown July 1943'.

noted a great improvement in personal appearance and deportment. She was now greeted with

> bright eyes and shining faces, clean shirts and pretty pinafores. You can hear a pin drop during the prayer and there is splendid attention right through the lesson. It is hard to realise that some fifty of these children are the very ones who used to swear and fight, stick pins and punch heads in those first exciting, discouraging weeks two years ago.

Introducing cleanliness and order was clearly part of the Sunday school's civilising mission.[14]

That the Sunday school was seen as the natural sphere for women rather then men missionaries was underlined on the arrival of a new missionary family: Mrs. Dora Phillips taught at the Doornfontein Sunday school from 1919, in cooperation with most of the day school teachers. When the day attendance began outstripping the Sunday numbers, this was attributed to the rivalry of other missions who had started their own Sunday schools in imitation. Miss Weir founded a second Sunday school in Western Native Township in 1921 just by ringing a bell to call the children. The school's enthusiastic growth showed at the least the boredom of the Johannesburg African child's Sunday and the welcome contribution to diversion which the classes made, 'a stream of children running up the hill' to meet the whites on arrival. The little text card given each child to take home each Sunday would have been a novelty, which in some cases at least must have conveyed Christian teaching that parents, perhaps now secularised though originally 'mission' Africans, were no longer giving.[15] Despite the alternative lure of Sunday earning opportunities for boys in newspaper-selling or caddying, the

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14 ABC: 15.4 v.29, Annual Report Transvaal 1913; 'Notes from the Transvaal May 1, 1915'.

15 ABC: 15.4 v.39, Transvaal Annual Reports 1922-3, 1925; ABC: 15.5 v.5, A. Weir to Mrs. Lee, 16 Dec. 1921, to Miss Lamson, 31 Jan. 1922.

number of scholars was almost higher than the teachers could cope with - 250 to 350 children on average, and once as many as 480. The 1931 division of responsibility for Sunday school superintendence confirmed that it was the women missionaries' department, no doubt because the men were busy enough with church preaching that day, and children had long been women's accepted religious sphere: Mrs. Phillips was in charge of the Doornfontein Sunday school, Miss Weir WNT, and Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Bridgman supervised the outstations such as Evaton.[16]

For almost the entire period of this study, the Board had Sunday schools which fed into day schools but not, it would appear, into churches. By the end of the thirties the position was changing and the Mission moved into the municipal locations in a new way, with its own church in Orlando as a home for entire families. Within the first couple of months of 1939, the day school in Orlando had 250 pupils, while the children in its accompanying Sunday school were 'such virgin soil', 'so eager' to learn hymns, choruses, psalms, the Lord's prayer.[17] Clearly, just as Anglican workers at Leseding found,[18] many of the families moved to Orlando had lost touch with the churches and were being re-Christianised through the younger generation. That the secular education offered by the schools had greater appeal than the spiritual teaching of the Sunday school was manifest by this stage too. The Board's ten registered schools in 1939 had 2,500 pupils, while the nine Sunday schools held regularly mustered

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16 ABC: 15.4 v.41, Weir to Miss Emerson, 4 Jan. 1927; v.43, '1931 Annual Report ABM Children's work in Johannesburg and Reef Locations'.

17 ABC: 15.4 v.43, Johannesburg Annual Report 1931; v.47, Mrs. Bridgman's newsletter, 15 April 1939.

18 See Ch. 8 section b).

only 850 scholars.[19] Women missionaries took turns with men in leading weekly morning prayer programmes at the day schools. Special training sessions for Sunday school teachers gave the ABM an intimate spiritual impact on a narrower circle of staff within its wider sphere of secular educational responsibility.[20]

Once the schools were established, the sort of annual festivities which had played such an important part in Sunday school culture in England could be introduced, providing entertainment, celebration, a break from cramped unhealthy surroundings, and the incentive of treats in the form of gifts and food for regular membership. For example, in 1921 the Doornfontein Sunday school took 175 children and twenty parents and friends in six wagons to Zoo Lake for a picnic followed by games and races.[21] In the thirties, reports tended to concentrate on such annual events as the Sunday school anniversary and the Christmas party, a sign that the schools had settled into more of a routine, with an established membership and programme in which these big events were particular highlights. It appears as though the Sunday schools provided for a very small minority a channel of marked upward educational and social mobility. In 1923, five of the girls from the Doornfontein slumyards were at Inanda, the Board's prestige boarding school in Natal, while ten of the boys in the day school and Sunday school had gone away to training institutes in the Transvaal or Natal in the past five years.[22]

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19 SOAS Mf, Phillips' News, 3 July 1939.

20 ABC: 15.4 v.44, Mrs. Bridgman's Annual Report 1937.

21 ABC: 15.5 v.5, Weir to Mrs. Lee, 16 Dec. 1921.

22 ABC: 15.5 v.5, Mrs. Bridgman to Miss Buckley, 2 May 1923.

Finally, contact with white children and the use of white teachers, features which recur even more prominently in, respectively, Ekutuleni's youth work and the Methodist Sunday schools, were also an element in the American Board's children's work. The 1920's concern with inter-racial contact of adults was being extended in the 1930's to children: white teachers and children from the Brixton Sunday school came to sing to their WNT counterpart in 1931 and were deeply impressed that 530 African children were present. Miss Weir praised God for the Brixton contingent's 'real missionary spirit and victory over Colour prejudice'. In 1932 a conference was held with the European teachers of the Sunday School Union on 'Problems of Native Sunday School Work', with Herbert Dhlomo, principal of the ABM day school, and Mr. Griffin, superintendent of the Wesleyan Sunday schools, giving talks on the African and European points of view. Staffs continued to be racially mixed, WNT having in 1936 for example six whites, two African volunteer helpers and six day school teachers.[23]

In the Anglican church, by contrast with the ABM, there had been families in the congregations and children in the church day schools since after the South African War, so the process of Sunday school formation did not lead to the establishment of primary schools. Nevertheless, again Sunday school was the particular sphere of women missionaries. Although various confirmation and Sunday Scripture classes were held intermittently for girls and mixed groups of children, more systematic Sunday schools for which teachers attended weekly preparation classes, were started in 1921 by Catherine Harries, a keenly evangelistic young missionary who had had

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23 ABC: 15.4 v.43, '1931 Annual Report Children's Work', Weir's Annual Report 1932; v.44, Mrs. Bridgman's Report 1936.

experience of such work during her three years as a parish worker in England.[24] Three years later, with four Sunday schools established, Deaconess Elsie Vigor felt that the African clergy were beginning to understand their value; she visited once a month a Sunday school of forty children run by two African women. The work expanded greatly as the 1920's progressed: by 1930, the Anglican lady workers were superintending eighteen Sunday schools. Their justification was seen as twofold - the need to teach personal religion and the dullness of the African child's Sunday. As with the Americans, many disciplinary difficulties had to be met in the early days; again, teaching help was given by whites too, such as Toc H members and European clergy, though African keenness and support were essential (linguistically, for a start). The link between this new concern for children and the regular life of the church was shown in, for example, the institution of a children's Eucharist at Nancefield once the Sunday school was established.[25]

Sunday schools could by no means count on regular attendance: there were too many counter-attractions in the location -

> it may be a circus or a Mine Boys Dance, or it may be wet, and people who possess only one garment do not go out much in the wet - or it may be cold - and well why get up when it is warm in bed? or why go to the "English Church" Sunday School when they give you a cup of tea at the Baptist Sunday School?

Nor could their auxiliary activities like Christmas plays escape the impact of such central social and economic concerns of the family as the weekly laundry done for whites: one year at Klipspruit Sunday school only a few of the chosen cast turned up at the last rehearsal for the Bethleham tableaux as the rest were 'engaged in on of the "washing stages" or...

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24 USPG Dos 2220; CWW Letters Received, C. Harries to Miss MacGregor, 16 Aug. 1921.

25 USPG, CWW Letters Received, Dss Vigor to Miss Saunders, 30 March 1924; The Watchman (Nov. 1930, July 1929).

looking after the smaller children while "Mother takes the washing to town"'.[26]

In 1933 Frances Chilton left her domestic science teaching job at St. Agnes to move to Buxton Street headquarters (by then called the House of Bethany) and soon began to reorganise the Reef Sunday schools. Some had practically died out, others had become very dull and uninteresting. She set out to visit each on two consecutive Sundays and tried to show superintendents how to run their schools on attractive modern lines. Young teachers were drawn in, like some of the older schoolboys from St. Peter's, and weekly training classes held for each school; she also sent out a suggested programme, copies of a lesson (with translations by others into four languages besides English) and Helps for Teachers each week, country schools being assisted solely by post. By mid-1937, excluding those of the Sophiatown and Orlando Missions discussed in Chapter 8, there were thirty-seven Reef Anglican Sunday schools with two thousand children under eighty-seven teachers; on this scale Christian teaching must have been making a fresh impact on the younger generation.[27]

Miss Chilton was still aware of imperfections and obstacles, though. At the start of the 1940's, she looked forward to the time when there would be enough staff to prepare graded lessons and enough enthusiastic teachers. Most of the Sunday schools were very inadequately staffed, often with two teachers trying to teach all ages and several languages at once. Dependence on day school staff for leadership led to disruption when teachers changed jobs, and the training days did not reach sufficiently beyond the faithful

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26 USPG, E, M. Phillips, 29 Jan. 1932 (filed 1931); Mission Field (Dec. 1933).

27 SWM Journal (April 1935), 27; Interview, Frances Chilton, 26 Feb. 1978; The Watchman (Aug. 1937).

few. Her objective was clearly to teach 'the Catholic faith' (that is, Anglo-Catholic) unlike the Americans who seem to have had no specifically Congregational axe to grind: she regretted that parents tended to feel one Sunday school was as good as another and were lured by 'extremely well run' Nonconformist Sunday schools with their many European teachers.[28]

Like the Anglicans, the Methodists had an extensive day school system along the Witwatersrand by the early 1920's. Notable educational expansion took place by 1940, when there were twenty-five Reef Methodist day schools, with 6,807 scholars and 130 teachers. In addition, in fifty-two Sunday schools, 4,273 children were taught by forty European and ninety African teachers.[29] Far less than in the case of the other two churches was this remarkable growth of religious instruction mainly the work of women leaders although Mrs. Grant had a crucial role in starting the first African Sunday school in 1921 and later in sustaining the biggest one. When a full-time single woman missionary was appointed from 1930, while she helped with Sunday school work, teaching at the Sophiatown Sunday school and later dividing her time with the Crown Mines and WNT schools as well, she does not appear to have had any special supervisory role.[30] The male laymen, both black and white, were probably too much entrenched in their control of the movement for Florence Brown to have dislodged them, had she so desired.

The real 'take-off' period in the Methodist Sunday school movement came when T. F. Griffin, a prosperous businessman and enthusiastic leader in white Methodist Sunday school work, asked in mid-1926 how European

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28 F. Chilton, 'Native Sunday Schools', The Watchman (Nov. 1940).

29 TM (Feb. 1940), 4.

30 Interview, F. Brown, and her Report to Synod 1943.

Sunday schools could be interested in missionary activities. Rev. E. W. Grant suggested they adopt an African Sunday school or take charge of one themselves. After a meeting at the Wesleyan Men's Institute, a Council of Native Sunday Schools with thirty European members and Griffin as secretary was set up. Within three months, existing schools at Spes Bona and Albert Street were flourishing, as were three new ones at Alexandra, Benoni and Sophiatown, while five more schools were planned. Within six months of the June meeting, there were forty Europeans involved in weekly African Sunday schools (usually as 'double-shift' teachers of black children in the morning and white children on Sunday afternoons), together with over twenty Africans, whose help was indispensable with the little ones unable to follow English.[31] Griffin's involvement in African Sunday schools became 'almost a passion...certainly an obsession', but the Grants themselves appear to have provided the dominant and unflagging stimulus. In 1932, when the number of European teachers had probably reached its peak at sixty-two, working in cooperation with fifty-nine Africans in twenty-five schools which had 2,775 children, and the Grants were about to transfer to Lovedale Bible School, Griffin testified to the teachers' 'real desolation' as they were 'about to lose the genius of the whole movement'. The Grants' personal charm had inspired great devotion.[32]

What is interesting is how Grant, from its very inception, was lauding the development of African Sunday schools as 'a far more promising solution to the "native problem" than any political one could be. It is going to do much to awaken a new missionary enthusiasm amongst the Europeans, and is placing our missionary appeal on a new level.' He particularly saw the involvement of European teachers as significant, in a way that situates

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31 TM (Aug. 1926), 3-4, (Nov. 1926), 25; South African National Sunday School Union, Native Sunday School Work in Towns and Industrial Areas (Port Elizabeth, 1931?), 5.

32 TM (May 1946), 5, (Feb. 1932), 17.

him firmly in the whole 'cooperation' ideology of the inter-racial joint councils of the 1920's, an ideology that had its heartbeat peculiarly in Johannesburg anyhow:

> What does this mean? It means that in their most impressionable years, and during critical days in this country, great numbers of native children are gaining their ideas of the qualities of the white race, of the mission and purpose of Christianity, of the Master Himself, from intimate contact with a virile, courageous, and joyous type of Christian disciple.

This joint venture might 'mean the suppression and ultimate elimination of mutual distrust between the races of the land'. This often sincere and guileless faith, that somehow contact with the right sort, the 'finest type', of Christian whites would curb African hostility and urban radicalism, was a recurring thread in cooperation thought, as was its counterpart, that contact with friendly Africans would break down white prejudice. An educated public opinion would help secure African rights and safeguard the country's future.[33]

A pamphlet on the Rand Methodist work emphasised that, for the 'detribalised' children in town who could not be sent home, segregation was impossible as a solution:

> It is therefore vitally important that these children should be helped to find a real place for themselves, and that the qualities necessary for them to fit in with the new conditions should be developed in them. This is a distinct challenge to the Church; for the choice is between (a) building up in them a strong Christian character, under conditions which will engender faith and confidence in Europeans; and (b) leaving them to be material for agitators who have plenty of scope for creating a sense of injustice and suspicion.[34]

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33 MMS 843, Grant to Burnet, 14 July 1926; TM (Nov. 1926), 25; WMDT (1930-31), 40. On inter-racial cooperation see also Introduction and Ch. 8 section a).

34 Native Sunday School Work, 7-9.

It is of course difficult to disentangle the extent to which this type of argument was posturing, in publications for white Methodist consumption, in order to further overcome white misgivings and secure support. But that it was not simply posturing is supported by the range of inter-racial activities in which Grant was in the forefront at this time. In 1929-30, he was secretary of the Transvaal Missionary Association and joint secretary of the Johannnesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives (of which he had been a member for some years). Grant also directed the Wesleyan Men's Institute, set up in 1925 as a more religious rival to the Bantu Men's Social Centre. By 1928 he was cooperating with Rheinallt Jones's Bantu Night Schools Committee. Grant had pioneered compound social work on the East Rand from 1916, well before Ray Phillips of the ABM came to Johannesburg. So the driving force behind Reef Methodist Sunday schools until 1932 came from a minister particularly alive to the social impact of the Gospel and its role in keeping inter-racial channels open for the ultimate security of white South Africa.[35]

Before Sunday school classes began among Africans, children had had little place in the life of the Reef Methodist church: 'Crowds of them were often present at a service, but they were only just seen, and certainly not heard'. Methodist conversion theology as brought by white missionaries had obviously exacerbated a perhaps 'traditional' neglect of the child's spiritual development, so that it was a revelation for adult African Christians to learn that 'children are not necessarily to be consigned to oblivion until they are old enough to pass through a cataclysmic upheaval'. (Similarly, perhaps we have an unwitting clue to the emphases inculcated in African Anglican churchmen in the incident where 'one of the leaders of

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35 Rhodes University, Cory Pamphlets 4, E. W. Grant, 'A Missionary looks back' (mimeo, 1967). See also WMDT through the 1920's.

the congregation at a Church meeting said "Why should we waste time talking any more about the children. Let us speak about FINANCE"'.)[36]

Singing was a great feature in the Methodist Sunday schools, in an order of service at first based on European models. Teachers used overseas lesson helps, with modifications, but in 1935 Grant produced a year's lessons, with notes for teachers, for African Sunday schools. The child's attendance and progress were marked by rewards of religious literature: text cards and ultimately a New Testament. The Council for Native Sunday Schools met quarterly in the Men's Institute for black and white teachers to give reports and collect such supplies and equipment. The more recreational side was not neglected: a number of Sunday schools had a Christmas party or annual picnic, while the Sunday school anniversary was important for arousing the interest of parents and other adults and was often combined in later years with a Wayfarer or Pathfinder parade.[37]

In summary, then, what we have in the Sunday schools of the American Board and Anglican missions on the Reef is a cooperative venture in Christian instruction carried out by women missionaries and African school teachers by and large among children who also attended the mission day schools - the relationship between secular and religious education was symbiotic. In the Methodist Church, the enterprise was the most explicitly of the three an inter-racial one. The involvement of white laymen and the influence of Grant with his notable social welfare commitments, gave Methodist Sunday schools a wider social purpose than ministers' wives alone might have. But this probably has more to do with the breadth of attitude of certain individuals and churches at a particular point in time than with

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36 TM (March 1930); USPG, E, M. Phillips, 29 Jan. 1932.

37 Native Sunday School Work, 7-9.

anything so vague as sex-related limitations of vision, because in the case of Dorothy Maud and Ekutuleni, a 'female' enterprise without a doubt, there was no lack of explicitly articulated social purpose.

c) The Origin and Nature of Wayfarers

The establishment in October 1925 of the Girl Wayfarers' Association can be traced to three main influences: the example of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides; the growing concern of missions with youth and leisure; and ideas of educational 'adaptation' in vogue in the 1920's.

Guiding in South Africa started in 1910, only a year after the British movement. It had made great advances among white girls by 1925, when the inclusion of African girls was shelved as premature.[38] As Reef women missionaries made contact with black schoolgirls in their regular needlework classes and again in the Sunday school, they became convinced that some sort of additional organisation was needed, a youth movement offering the benefits of Guiding. Such a movement would 'help in the adjustment to civilized conditions of these girls, and be for their spiritual, moral and physical well-being'; it 'would teach the right use of leisure, give wholesome discipline through teamwork and games, and inculcate loyalty to authority and the idea of sisterhood for service'.[39] Girls elsewhere in the country were showing interest in inclusion in the Guides: the Cape Girls Pathfinder Society borrowed the name of the mission adaptation of Scouts, while the 'Lightfinders' surfaced on the Reef in 1924. In early 1925 a Transvaal Council was formed with Mrs. Rheinallt Jones as Superintendent (her husband

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38 R. Kerr (comp.), The Story of a Million Girls. Guiding and Girl Scouting Round the World (London, 1936), 58-70.

39 International Missionary Council (IMC) Papers, SOAS, 1229, File 'Wayfarers and Pathfinders', 'The Girl Wayfarers Association in South Africa' (n.d.). Unless otherwise indicated, all material used here from Box 1229 is from this file.

was by then Chairman of the Transvaal Pathfinders), Mrs. Ray Phillips as Treasurer, and Caro Happer, an Anglican woman missionary, as Secretary to the Lightfinders. Wayfarers was an amalgamation, performed later that year, of Lightfinders and Girl Pathfinders.[40]

The attraction of a form of Guiding needs, secondly, to be set in the context of a decade in which leading urban missionaries, backed up by liberals and financed at times by commerce and industry, devoted a great deal of attention to 'constructive recreation' for the African. This was what Ray Phillips, its chief exponent, called 'moralizing the leisure time of natives in city and country alike', on the principle that 'whoever captures the leisure time of the people gets the people in the long run'.[41] Initially interest was shown in the adult African male. Phillips's film shows in the mine compounds, his football clubs, his provision for the educated elite through the debates and social facilities of the BMSC,[42] were meant to keep the African from both the Devil and the Communist agitator, who were assumed to be equally eager to find work for idle hands. The Christian youth movements came to be seen as an important element in the permeation of African life by that social Christianity which was deemed by 'progressive' missionaries at the end of the twenties to offer the best chance of winning Africans for the Gospel.[43]

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40 IMC 1229, 'Girl Wayfarers Association in Africa, 1927'; CWW Letters Received Africa, C. Happer to A. Saunders, 20 May 1925.

41 Phillips, Bantu are Coming, 58, 128. See also T. Couzens, '"Moralizing Leisure Time": The Transatlantic Connection and Black Johannesburg 1918-1936', CIAS Conference, Jan. 1980 .

42 Phillips, Bantu are Coming, 42-6, 116-122.

43 Advance (Nov. 1929), 203; J. D. Taylor, 'The Social Motive in Evangelism', South African Outlook (Dec. 1933), 239-40.

As soon as Phillips came to Johannesburg in late 1918, he started an African Pathfinder troop, then equipped a modern supervised playground in Doornfontein (1919-24), and initiated football and hockey leagues for school children. Both he and Grant helped to lead the Pathfinder movement on the Reef, Grant going on to become District Superintendent in the Eastern Cape. It was little surprise then, that the wives of both these missionaries, already running Sunday schools, became prominent in the Wayfarer movement, Dora Phillips giving over thirty year's service to the Association. Phillips was especially exercised by the problem of the negative morality missions had brought to Christians. For younger people, the life of church members, with its restrained propriety and hymn singing, appeared intolerably dull and staid by comparison with the liveliness of heathen dancing, singing, clapping and beer drinking. A more positive alternative had to be provided or the church would lose the children. Thus Wayfaring was described by a woman missionary as supplying

> "the fun of the Fair" to our Christian girls whom we have cut off from all the fun and excitement of heathen life. We don't want them to dance and yell and sing as the heathen girls do, and if we put nothing in the place of that, we have the danger of the empty house into which the seven devils enter.44

It is significant that when Wayfarers began, games and singing formed an important part of their work, a Games leaflet being issued to leaders early on, and English country dancing attempted to substitute for African, in recognition of the appeal of rhythm and movement to girls.

The reference above to the perils of the 'empty house' touches on a final facet of the concern for Christianized recreation: it was seen as a

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44 Phillips, Bantu are Coming, 100, 103, 93-4; L. M. Forrest, 'Evangelism and the Bantu Girl', Report of Proceedings of Eighth General Missionary Conference of South Africa (Lovedale, 1932), 140.

solution to the problem of social disintegration and the destruction of traditional life. Allusions to the breakdown of tribal sanctions, parental authority and sexual mores became almost the cliches of white urban Christian lament in the inter-war decades. The burden of expectations vested in mission youth movements comes through in Schapera's comment to the New Education Fellowship conference in 1934:

> The degeneration of the sexual life; the loss of parental control; the decay of family and tribal education and discipline; the growth of irresponsibility and licence: these call for the development of positive forces and organised activities such as are provided by the Pathfinder and Wayfarer movements.[45]

The third influence on Wayfarers, that of 'adaptation', was initially forced on the movement by default by the rebuff from the Girl Guide Association: if African girls could not belong to a branch of the world-wide movement, they would have to have their own version, with their own uniforms, rules, promises, tests and awards. But as the Association evolved, it came to have certain dimensions which aligned it with the philosophy of Thomas Jesse Jones, C. T. Loram and the Phelps Stokes education commissions of the early 1920's. 'Anxiety about social disintegration, a frankly racist view of African capacities, and an effort to make education functional in a colonial economy' is how one recent author summarises the dominant strands of this ideology.[46] 'Adaptation' went hand in hand with 'cooperation' (the two watchwords of the 1926 International Missionary Conference at Le Zoute),[47] although it was axiomatic that in joint inter-racial ventures, whites were to have the guiding role of the elder brother (or sister).

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45 Malherbe, Educational Adaptations, 409.

46 R. W. Strayer, The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa. Anglicans and Africans in Colonial Kenya, 1875-1935 (London, 1978), 93.

47 E. W. Smith, The Christian Mission in Africa (London, 1926), 92.

Wayfarers was not mooted as an all-African movement, like Jabavu's Pioneers in the Eastern Cape: white leadership coupled with the training of African deputies was the agreed model.

Jesse Jones sought to apply to African as to Negro education two general principles: adaptation (to people's instincts, experience and future) and community consciousness. These values 'could best be embodied in schools through emphasis on what Jones called the "Simples" of health, home life training, industry (including agriculture), and recreation'.[48] The embodiment of these very values in the Girl Wayfarers' Association is most striking. The recreational stress on games and singing has already been referred to, while the other three elements - health, home life training and industry - correspond neatly with three of the categories of proficiency badges towards which the girls could work, as outlined in the Association's first handbook. These were entitled the Home Way, the Health Way and the Hand Way. The fourth, the High Way, which included an interpreter's test, and badges for nature and traffic knowledge, was less directly in this tradition. A fifth group of badges, the Heart Way, relating to Bible knowledge, was added round 1932, and provides a necessary reminder of the unique Christian emphasis of the movement. It is regrettable that the early days of the movement are so little documented - Mrs. Jones's correspondence on Wayfarers has nothing preserved prior to 1934. Despite an assertion that the Wayfarer handbook was drawn up by two Guide Commissioners,[49] it does not seem fanciful to detect Loram's guiding hand or the Rheinallt Joneses' imbibing of the key notions of Jesse Jones.

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48 K. J. King, Pan-Africanism and Education (Oxford, 1971), 97.

49 Kerr, Story, 71.

Loram chaired the meeting which made a South African organisation of the two movements for girls then existing in the Cape and the Transvaal. On October 11th, 1925 he reported to Jesse Jones:

> The culmination of our planning for the Native Girl Guides is coming when we meet tomorrow at Bloemfontein. I am to preside at a National Conference which I have called at the request of the acting and warring factions. Mrs. R. Jones will be there. I hope that I can keep her in order. It will be a ticklish meeting. Hold your thumbs up for me.[50]

Loram was a close friend of the Rheinallt Joneses,[51] a member since its inception in 1920 of the permanent Native Affairs Commission, and South Africa's most prominent educationist, whose work, The Education of the South African Native (1917) had won him participation in the Phelps Stokes Commissions to South and West, and later East Africa.[52] His book argued forcefully for a differentiated and rurally-rooted education for Africans in a segregationist South Africa in which they were bound to have a subordinate role; precisely the sort of approach which Jesse Jones could endorse.

Kenneth King has very skilfully demonstrated the ambiguities and ambivalences of 'adaptation', which 'attracted support from racist as easily as from progressive educators'.[53] The Girl Wayfarers' Association was not free of such ambiguities either. Community consciousness and practical skills and knowledge were to be allied with loyalty and discipline;

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50 IMC 1229, File 'S.A. Native Affairs Dr. C. T. Loram', Loram to T. Jesse Jones, 11 Oct. 1925.

51 See E. H. Brookes, 'J. D. & Edith Rheinallt Jones', 140.

52 King, Pan-Africanism, 52-6.

53 Ibid., 7, 49, 122, 145-6.

badges could be won for what were clearly skills inappropriate even to an 'adapted' village home and more likely to be used in domestic service. Leadership and 'uplifting' initiative of a specific sort were to be fostered, within a framework of happy partnership with and ultimate deference to white superintendents.

The 1925 conference in Bloemfontein created a Union-wide Girl Wayfarers' Association with provincial committees in the two strongholds, the Cape and the Transvaal.[54] For the first year, leaders worked from a roneod handbook,[55] but by the end of 1926 a printed one appeared, a fascinating document.[56] The Association aimed

> primarily to help girls of the non-European races of South Africa to become better Christians by training them in habits of truthfulness, obedience, industry and courtesy; teaching them services and handcrafts useful to others as well as to themselves; promoting their physical development; making them good homemakers and capable of bringing up good children.

Significance might be attributed to its omission of the Guide aims of developing powers of observation and self-reliance, and its addition of truthfulness and industry! It also substituted 'better Christians' as its all-inclusive objective for 'good citizenship' of Guiding. This Christian emphasis is one of the marks distinguishing Wayfaring from Guiding, where a girl simply promises to do her duty to God. With regard to method, the handbook reminded leaders that the whole movement was

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54 IMC 1229, 'G.W.A. Eastern Province News Letter' (1931).

55 IMC 1229, 'Girl Wayfarers' Association in Africa'.

56 IMC 1229, Girl Wayfarers' Association, Handbook of Rules and Organisation. Revised November, 1926 (Lovedale, n.d.) (hereafter Handbook).

> based on the idea of training character by play and voluntary activities, and not by ordinary school methods, and therefore the weekly meetings should be varied, and should include plenty of games, indoor and outdoor, while singing, story-telling, make-believe and simple acting may all be used.[57]

The Girl Wayfarers' Association consisted of a number of local detachments, each under a Leader helped by one or more Sub-Leaders. The key unit was the Group of six to eight girls, led by a Grouper, with perhaps five groups forming a detachment. Before she could be enrolled, a girl had to attend for at least six weeks to prove her keenness, and pass a test of her knowledge and understanding of the four Wayfarer Laws and the Health Laws. Respectively these were, reflecting the twin concerns with character and health training:

1. A Wayfarer does her duty to God.
2. A Wayfarer helps others.
3. A Wayfarer is a friend to animals.
4. A Wayfarer always does her best in work and play.

and Be clean
Eat suitable food
Wash with plenty of water
Wear light clean clothes.

'Ceremonial', it was asserted, 'makes a great appeal to most girls. It is therefore the policy of the Girls Wayfarers to use it as much as possible'. Enrolling ceremonies were outlined, with their form of words accompanying the entry of the new girl into the circle of members, who agreed to receive her as a comrade; she would shake hands all round and the enrolment concluded with the Wayfarer prayer. She could then wear uniform: a badge with a flame emblem and, unless she could not afford it, a brown dress with matching hat.[58]

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57 Handbook, 6.

58 Handbook, 1, 3, 9-10.

The four Main Ways which followed this First Step were voluntary, but girls were to be encouraged to take the proficiency tests for the reward of coloured badges. It was clearly the badges for the Home Way which one woman missionary (who later supported the move to Guides) 'always had in the back of my mind...were really teaching them to be a good domestic or something like that, not a leader', a charge an opposing missionary strenuously denies. It was the Housework section, even more than the cookery and laundry badges, that brought out the contradictions of the Jesse Jones approach, for the skills rewarded appeared increasingly likely to be of use to a white employer rather than enriching the community life of a 'good' village African. For the three stages, the Wayfarer was to polish silver, clean the kitchen and the stove, and light the fire; dust furniture, books and ornaments, clean windows, get rid of vermin, and turn out a sitting room; do the daily work necessary in a bedroom, answer the door and where possible the telephone, take messages and wait at table.[59] The Hand Way, with badges for sewing, knitting, crochet, embroidery and handwork (like making mats and toys), was more likely to be both of use and enjoyable to the girls, and built on skills already encountered by many in day school sewing classes.

Whatever the intentions of the framers of the Home Way, it appears that the Health Way was initially the most attractive to members. The prestige of nursing as a career for African girls was being entrenched in these years, as a perusal of Skota's African Yearly Register, with its sublime photo-portraits of young African nurses, or of the black petty bourgeois press confirms; and it was thought that the Wayfarer movement

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59 Interviews, C. Lawrance, F. Chilton; Handbook, 12.

definitely encouraged that trend towards taking up nursing.[60]

Branches for younger girls between eight and thirteen, soon called Sunbeams, were also being established. For enrolment, the girl had to know the Lord's Prayer and the Junior Wayfarer's special prayer, as well as their laws: 'A Junior Wayfarer says her prayers every day. A Junior Wayfarer is truthful, obedient, clean and cheerful.' Six weeks regular attendance with clean hands and face, tidy hair and no pins fastening her clothes was a further prerequisite. Finally, she had to be able to skip and do two 'craft' activities: bead-threading, making a basket or mat, or sewing on buttons. The blue uniform was not compulsory. The various tests suggested for the juniors - modelling, writing, sewing, crochet, handwork, washing, housework, basket-making, gardening, toy-making, knitting, and Scripture repetition - were similar, though of course simpler, to those for older girls, but were not organised into the division of the different 'Ways'.[61] An enrolment ceremony for Sunbeams suggested a few years later and clearly modelled on the Brownies', conveys something of the cheerful team spirit the movement hoped, in a rather 'precious' fashion, to inculcate: when 'Mother Sun' asks the Sunbeams gathering round her, 'Who are you little people?', their reply includes the lines:

> We're the Sunbeams, here's our aim
> Upward all and play the game....
> We're the bright and shining "Rays"
> Lighting up the rainy days.[62]

The initial response to the movement throughout the Transvaal was encouraging, indicating, the Wayfarer Council felt sure, 'the need there

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60 SOAS M4581, Evidence of D. Maud to NEC, 7614.

61 Handbook, 5-7.

62 IMC 1229, 'G.W.A. Eastern Province News Letter' (1931).

was for a Christian Social Organisation of this kind'. Within two years there were just under two thousand girls involved. Already over four hundred proficiency badges had been earned, the most popular being those in Home Nursing, Hygiene and First Aid. Most detachments had attempted some sort of social service too. Two training schools for the altogether forty sub-leaders had been held for, despite the 'domestic servant' slur, Wayfarers clearly aimed to foster at least some African women's leadership potential. Two other persisting features of the movement had made their appearance in these early years: 'reviews', that is, large gatherings of uniformed detachments ceremonially inspected by a notable dignitary (Lady Baden Powell herself in 1926), and camps.[63]

It would be interesting to know whether other African adults agreed with Archibald M'belle of Herschel that 'the idea of our girls donning military uniforms, drilling and parading them in the streets, and sending them out camping, is objectionable'. Individual officials hastened to assure him in the columns of Umteleli that militarism was not their intention, and that Wayfaring's promoters believed, 'no less ardently than himself, that the place of Native women folk is in the home'. Furthermore, Mrs. Jones commented mildly,

> Singing, drill and games will be encouraged (but not in the streets) and I cannot help feeling that nicely brought up Native girls will be happier and more wisely employed in their spare time in such pursuits than in lonely rooms or aimless wanderings in the streets.

Nevertheless, M'belle blasted their 'mock militarism' again three years later, in a further complaint about its social dangers and undermining of parental authority. Ray Phillips was able to induce favourable verdicts on

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63 IMC 1229, 'Wayfarers Association of South Africa. Report of Transvaal Council' (1927).

the mission youth movements from Reef African adults: 'Should be encouraged to the utmost' and 'Useful organisation to enforce discipline in young folks'. But these somewhat bland comments cannot be said to be particularly revealing of the attitude of African parents to their children's membership of the Wayfarer and Pathfinder movements.[64]

We have equally little by way of individual documentary record of the African girls' attitude to the movement, though further oral research could help. An essay by a Methodist Wayfarer in the mid-1930's reflects the attraction exerted by the public and visible lure of dress and crowds; her striking moral earnestness recalls the breast-beating style of Evangelical conversion accounts:

> When first I had not joined the Wayfarer Movement I led a very peculiar and extraordinary life, selfish, disobedient, lazy, unpunctual and untruthful. When Wayfaring spirit crept into me, I was first attracted by the brown uniform and parades, which often took place. I wished to be in the crowd, also to be admired in brown, though I did not know what it meant. [After learning the Laws parrot-fashion, she was surprised when her enrolment was delayed because she punched a girl who mocked her, and was punished for being late at school.] I was so careful never to be misled by any of the former deeds for fear I would be delayed from my uniform...Wayfaring has created in me a better life and uplifted me, from what I was.

In view of the example of by then well-established uniformed women's prayer societies, it was probably not wishful thinking for a woman missionary to suggest that for some girls at least the donning of a uniform (then seldom required by school) immediately created a standard of morals. The uniforms were clearly a drawcard. It availed nothing to protest their relative unimportance. 'We always tell them that they need not have their uniform',

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64 Letters in Umteleli wa Bantu: from M'belle, 23 May 1925, 23 June 1928; from Iris Northam for Organising Secretary, GWA, Cape Town, and Edith Jones, 20 and 6 June 1925; Phillips, Bantu in the City, 301.

said Dorothy Maud, 'and need not get them in a hurry, but they do love their uniforms and they look after them well'.[65]

The Venda school girl who, in the 1950's, wrote about her childhood for Blacking,[66] must have been a typical Wayfarer recruit: it was not by chance that the Association's motto was 'Upward'. She was bright in class and won over to all the aspiring and self-improving enthusiasms which mission education sought to impart: knitting to earn pocket money; ambitious for higher education and a nursing career so that she would be able to save money; delighting in her school choir's competitive exploits and athletic prowess - 'Our school is indeed very civilized'. She was quick to learn her Wayfarer Laws, but recalls them incorrectly! She remembered songs and games learnt, and comments on the 'really smart' uniform. Her memories also point up what must have been an all too common gap between the intentions of the movement and the actual features enjoyed by the girls. The most 'wonderful' part of the 'splendid game' in which her school was involved at a rally, was the fact that 'our European' had been clever enough to think of a play including food, which was clearly to her its outstanding feature; any deeper meaning to be attached to the five buttered loaves of brown bread used for portraying Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 gets no mention.[67]

d) Reef Missions and Wayfarers

As has already been shown, Wayfarers in 1925 had an ABM Treasurer and

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65 TM (Feb. 1935), 4; Forrest, 'Evangelism and the Bantu Girl', 139; SOAS M4581, 7613.

66 J. B. Blacking, Black Background. The Childhood of a South African Girl (New York, 1964), passim.

67 Ibid., 101-7, 'Wayfaring at Our School'.

an Anglican Secretary. By 1931, Mrs. E. W. Grant was National Secretary for the movement under Mrs. Patrick Duncan as Central President, while Ruth Allcock, the daughter of the Transvaal Methodist Chairman, was Secretary for the Transvaal.[68] Congregational, Anglican and Methodist missionary women thus took the leading official positions in the Transvaal movement under Edith Jones's superintendence, and theirs were the most numerous and energetic detachments on the Reef; all missions active in the Transvaal joined in Wayfaring as the thirties progressed.

Miss Happer's verdict in 1927 was that the Anglican girls welcomed the movement, 'for it has brought so much brightness and help into their lives'. It was only the necessity for white detachment leaders that was holding her back from enrolling all the girls who were showing interest.

> The meetings start off with prayer followed by an instruction and some motherly advice; we then settle down to some work for a while always ending up with some exciting team games which all the girls enter into most heartily. It is with great joy that one sees them dispersing off to their homes with happy smiling faces, a most cheering sight I can assure you.

The movement was still perilously short of European helpers in 1931, when Mary Phillips was Leader for eighteen 'English Church' detachments. No African sub-leaders on the Reef had yet been promoted to Leader, but it appears as though very often this is virtually what they were acting as in any case, doing 'splendidly with very few exceptions'. She gave them as much help as possible and would visit anything between once a month and once a term, according to need. Her affection for the Sunbeams, battling to say their Law in English or thread their needles, is patent. It is salutary, lest one should be tempted to overstress the instrumentality of

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68 IMC 1229, 'Wayfarers Association of South Africa. Report of Transvaal Council' and 'G.W.A. Eastern Province News Letter'.

Wayfarers, to read Mary Phillips's lyrical account of a great joint African youth rally on the occasion of another visit by the Baden Powells. She was clearly caught up in the elevated spirit of earnest aspiration and youthful enthusiasm:

> the Chief Pathfinder spoke in clear tones to the Chief Scout & said "Sir, you see before you Young Africa" - one felt it was just worth every ounce of keen-ness & perseverance one could muster to help along this young Africa which is keen, so keen, to think rightly & to serve God with the devotion of which he is capable.
>
> 'Upward' shout the Wayfarers, echoed by the Sunbeams, 'Forward' shout the Pathfinders - & together we press along the Road, adding to our numbers as we go & trying to keep our faces to the goal towards which we strive.[69]

By the end of 1932, Mary Phillips ran twenty-three Wayfarer detachments. The training of the sub-leaders was being regarded then as work of special value; no doubt, as they were mostly teachers, the movement had served indirectly to combat the problem of the declining sense of the teacher's vocation. When Frances Chilton succeeded as Wayfarer and Sunday school organiser the following year, she found that Wayfarers filled a great need particularly in the country districts (where the Reef Anglican missionaries always had a few church congregations on farms), which were short of amusements for children. Thus the movement was showing encouraging growth by 1935. Wayfaring was a prominent feature of the work for children carried on at Ekutuleni too, and by 1934, some 250 girls formed ten detachments in Sophiatown.[70]

The teachers and girls were very enthusiastic when the American Board in 1926 started detachments in areas where Sunday and day schools had preceded them and on which they drew. Missionary Alice Weir and a lady

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69 USPG, E, C. Happer, 1927, M. Phillips, 29 Jan. 1932 (filed 1931).

70 SWM Journal (April 1935), 27; Ekutuleni Annual Reports (1933-4).

teacher who helped with Sunday school gave afternoon classes in cookery, bed-making and other domestic skills. Wayfaring was described as helping the African girls - the order chosen may be significant - 'to make good servants, Housewives and Mothers who will understand how to take care of their children'. (Miss Weir's position in 1919-20 as first superintendent of the Helping Hand Club, no doubt helped form her view of the future ahead of black female adolescents.) They joined in provincial and national activities: in June 1931, for example, when over 2,000 Wayfarers were inspected by Lady Baden Powell, and in a conference that year for forty to fifty leaders from all over South Africa. By 1934, Mrs. Phillips, in addition to acting as Provincial Treasurer, ran Wayfarer and Sunbeam groups in all three ABM schools in Brakpan, Doornfontein and WNT. Ray Phillips commented genially from personal experience on the absorbing enthusiasm of the women leaders of the movement: 'Husbands of the ladies concerned complain that they hear nothing else in their homes but "Wayfarers, Wayfarers!"'[71]

The first Wayfarer constitution was hammered out, at least according to E. W. Grant's recollection, on the Grants' typewriter, and Mrs. Grant started the first Methodist Wayfarer detachment on the Reef, as well as becoming National Secretary subsequently. By 1929, there were three detachments meeting at the Wesleyan Men's Institute, as well as nine along the Witwatersrand, in Florence Brown's care. This meant 'individual knowledge of about 250 keen and intelligent girls, with all the opportunities of shaping their character which this splendid movement affords'. By March 1930, the Methodists had 450 Wayfarers and 150 Sunbeams altogether in the

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71 ABC: 15.5 v.5, Miss Weir to Miss Emerson, 25 June 1926; ABC: 15.4 v.39, Transvaal Report 1926-7; v.41, Weir to Emerson, 4 Jan. 1927 and '1931 Annual Report A.B.M. Children's Work in Johannesburg and Reef Locations'; v.43, R. Phillips's Annual Report; Bantu are Coming, 103.

Transvaal, so the Reef membership was just under half the total.[72]

Unlike certain women at Ekutuleni, Miss Brown had never been a Guide in England or an outdoor camper, but was 'hardy brought up', as was to be expected in a family of ten children with the father bringing home a very modest wage from the local woollen mills. Thus when she organised training weekends for Wayfarer Groupers at the Methodist school at Spes Bona, using the classrooms round its triangular courtyards, she would sleep on a camp stretcher or in her car. Arrangements were economical: the girls paid 1/6d. each to cover their simple needs of mealie porridge, bread and jam for lunch and stew for supper. At such sub-leaders' camps, the young teachers (mostly) would be taught first aid, nature, country dancing, games and singing, all for use in their detachments. Affection for the children came without effort: 'I just used to love those Sunbeams', she recalled, while an African Biblewoman commented admiringly after a special meeting where Miss Brown conducted the Albert Street Wayfarers and Sunbeams in Negro spirituals, that she had been 'training them with ease, for she has the love for them'.[73]

Increasingly, big rallies played a valuable part in inspiring members with the joy of feeling they belonged to a larger movement, while simultaneously reinforcing respect for notables in authority. In such a gathering at Kilnerton in 1932, the Wayfarers were inspected and addressed by the Governor General, Lord Clarendon. A Reef Methodist Wayfarer Rally was held in November 1933 at the Men's Institute, with a programme 'made up of Action Songs, Fancy Drills, First Aid Display by Wayfarers, and Songs, Games and Dances by Sunbeams'. In keeping with the employment difficulties of the

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72 Grant, 'A Missionary Looks Back', 7; WMDT (1930-31), 38-9; TM (March 1930), 19.

73 Interviews, F. Brown, 6 and 25 Oct. 1977; TM (May 1935), 7; TM (Oct. 1933), 21.

time, the Central President stressed in her talk to the girls 'the need for thoroughness and reliability' (a clear case of Wayfaring encouraging diligence): 'Men and women who sought work and found it were those who paid attention to detail; those who were successful in keeping work were those who gave of their best'.[74] Despite pacificatory remarks to the like of M'belle, the movement did parade girls through the street and in male company. In April 1934, 300 Pathfinders and 300 Wayfarers from Methodist Reef detachments met at the Men's Institute and marched through the city centre for their first joint service in Methodist Central Hall, attracting the crowd as they went: 'Flags and banners set what was already a magnet for curiosity ablaze with interest and appeal'. The following year, the Pathfinder bands and the 'flags flying' again made the march through Johannesburg the outstanding feature of the day.[75]

Despite their united support at the foundation of Wayfarers, the three key Reef missions found themselves divided in the mid-1930's over the crucial question of the movement's future. In 1934 the South African Girl Guide Association gave the GWA a definite invitation to join as a separate branch. The Cape was in favour but Mrs. Jones, as superintendent of the Transvaal stronghold, was against, at any rate for the moment. She considered that the plan would undermine the 'adaptation' principle on which Wayfaring had been based. European ideas and methods would permeate, whereas 'the whole conception of Guides for Africa should be coloured by Non-European needs'.[76] She and her husband were showing heightened enthusiasm

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74 TM (Nov. 1933), 5, (Jan. 1934), 5.

75 TM, (June 1934), 6, (June 1935), 10.

76 WUL, SAIRR, Rheinallt Jones Collection (RJC), Mrs. Jones to Mrs. Duncan, 11 Sept. 1934.

for their Christian youth movements as substitutes for traditional initiation or fused with traditional youth organisations like the ibutho regiments being revived at that time by the Swazi paramount. If linked with Guides and Scouts, the African organisations should remain parallel, rather than lose their independence as incorporated branches.[77] However, within her Transvaal ranks, the Anglican women of Ekutuleni in Sophiatown opposed Mrs. Jones, Dorothy Maud threatening to resign if the arrangement were not accepted. Mrs. Jones characterised them as Guide workers of some standing, organising 'urbanised and detribalised girls' from 'a particularly race conscious and "difficult" district', attracted by the European Guide uniform. She could not sacrifice 'the need of the great body of my girls to that of a small group'.[78]

Even after a GWA majority vote accepted the branch scheme, which was ratified in January 1936, Mrs. Jones's misgivings continued, particularly because of the resistance of the DRC and German missions to the plan. In a sense she was sheltering the conservative, slow-moving missions from the Westernising, and potentially racially equalising, influences they feared were embodied in Guiding. Having 'ruled supreme' for a decade 'in the affairs of her beloved Wayfarers', the strong-willed, energetic Mrs. Jones presumably did not relish the prospect of losing control of a large, comprehensive movement either. When she asked for a reconsideration, the

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77 WUL, AD843, B25.1, for material from Jones's 1935 Conference on Youth Movements in Africa.

78 RJC, Mrs. Jones to Dame Katherine Furse (head of the Guide World Bureau and also Dorothy Maud's aunt, which no doubt reinforced Maud's preference for Guides), 24 July 1935. Clare Lawrance, for instance, had a London Guider diploma and had worked with Guides in the West Indies. For Wayfarer 'nationalism', see Ashley, Peace-Making, 24-5.

Ekutuleni members resigned from the Transvaal Wayfarer Council. The Transvaal bishops then advised all Anglican Wayfarer troops to ally themselves with the Cape and Natal in acceptance of the Guide offer.[79] Thus Transvaal Anglican African girls became Guides and all the other missions (ABM, Berlin, Hermannsburg, Swiss, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic) remained in a much larger, distinct movement for African girls that claimed to be more suited to their needs and allowed more flexibility to individual missions. In 1939, Mrs. Jones flaunted over 22,000 members and 500 officers, and rejoiced that 'Wayfarers are absolutely booming. If I had more time, I could enrol a new detachment every day for a whole year. We just cannot cope with the demand'.[80]

Dora Phillips and Florence Brown, the leading figures in Reef Wayfarers at the end of the thirties, stayed with the movement far beyond the close of our period. Mrs. Phillips had been in America on furlough at the height of the incorporation controversy, but was soon giving the teachers training days, after which they 'went away full of enthusiasm and pep'.[81] GWA Vice-President and Reef Superintendent in the late 1940's, Dora Phillips headed the Association as President from 1952 until her retirement to the United States in 1957, when she was made Honorary Life President, which gave her 33 years in the movement since its inception. Florence Brown's connection was possibly even more significant. By 1941 she had about nine hundred

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79 Brookes, 'J. D. & Edith Rheinallt Jones', 155; RJC, Mrs. Jones to Rev. E. Carter, 10 Nov. 1936; S.A. Outlook, (Nov. 1937), 265.

80 RJC, Mrs. Jones to Miss M. Wrong, 30 June 1939. I discuss the split in more detail in an essay in a forthcoming book edited by P. Kallaway. The destruction of relevant correspondence by the Ekutuleni women makes Mrs. Jones's side of the story easier to trace (in her extensive correspondence) than theirs.

81 ABC: 15.4 v.47a, Mrs. Phillips to Miss Emerson, 2 Feb. 1938.

girls from Delmas to Randfontein to supervise and did not flag in her efforts. 'All day and every day, Mrs. Jones said [at a fund-raising garden party], including most Saturdays and Sundays, Miss Brown is working among these girls, teaching sewing, visiting detachments, training leaders, holding week-end camps, Sunday services and enrolments.' By 1943, she supervised 1,150 girls in sixteen detachments each of Wayfarers and Sunbeams, but forty-four African officers who were also school teachers did the work, while Miss Brown herself had conducted 146 meetings that year. She was assisted full-time by Julia Maaga, a former teacher, from 1944; for the 1,600 girls under their care, there were never enough Wayfarer camps. Although Miss Brown retired as Methodist mission worker and Wayfarer Reef Divisional Superintendent in 1946, she was back as full-time Organising Secretary to the Girl Wayfarers' Association from 1948-60, driving thousands of miles annually to visit and encourage isolated detachments.[82] This revived the movement, which had languished somewhat because of the war, and Mrs. Jones's death in 1944. Thus although the Anglicans left the Wayfarer movement in 1936, ABM and Methodist missionary leadership continued to be vital to the Association.

This chapter has particularly concerned itself with the role of women missionaries in initiating, leading and sustaining Sunday schools for African children and a Christian youth movement for girls in the townships along the Witwatersrand in the inter-war years. Both agencies had an important spiritual task in a second or third generation church where children were admitted by baptism, not adult conversion and a lengthy

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82 TM (June 1941), 4; Transvaal Methodist Synod Minutes, 'Witwatersrand Methodist Native Mission, Report of Social Worker Miss Florence Brown, July 1943'; Report in Synod Minutes 1944; Girl Wayfarers' Association. Annual Report January 1947 to December 1948.

catechumenate, and in an era of decreasing religious influence for the day school. But, no less than their British predecessors, both also had clear social and cultural intentions and effects. Talk of 'psychological atrocities' seems inappropriately extreme here, nor were Reef Sunday schools catering to an industrial child labour force. Rather, missionaries favoured the middle class model of dependent, school-going children. However, the Brigade aim of class conciliation and the defusing of urban working class discontent,[83] had its counterpart in Johannesburg in the emphasis in Sunday schools and youth movements on white-initiated inter-racial cooperation, following marked post-war urban black militancy. Rheinallt Jones explicitly described Pathfinders as 'a form of social insurance'.[84]

At the local level, women missionaries relied on black school teachers. 37.5 per cent of Transvaal teachers in 1937 taught in Sunday school, while virtually half helped with youth movements (nearly two-thirds for women teachers). As half the staff in Transvaal schools were under twenty-nine years old, their youth facilitated easier relationships with children in the churches' extra-curricular activities.[85] How should the role of these African agents be evaluated? Ray Phillips described teachers as 'strategically placed for rendering heroic service' in the application of the social Gospel to their fellow Africans. 'Unquestionably these organizations are responsible for the marked improvement to our schools in discipline and in moral tone', asserted Mrs. Bridgman in the late 1920's.[86] A radically different viewpoint

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83 See footnotes 3 and 4 above.

84 Koch, 'Slumyard Culture', 21.

85 P. A. W. Cook, The Transvaal Native Teacher (Pretoria, 1939), 77-8, 48.

86 Bantu are Coming, 104, Report of the Seventh General Missionary Conference (Lovedale, 1928), 66.

comes from later researchers. Legassick sees black teachers as part of a 'colonized' elite, along with clergymen, lawyers and others whom white liberals had 'assiduously fostered' in the inter-war period. As a group, they were meant to serve the function of 'social control of the remainder of the African population' though they had the potential for resisting this role. Shula Marks writes of the 'psychological conversion if not psychological colonization' of the John Dube generation, which accepted mission ideology with its belief in advance through education, working with sympathetic whites and adopting Christian values.[87] The ambiguities of the teachers' situation and of the Wayfarer movement itself should not be underplayed.

The 'progressive' aspirations of both movements, particularly Wayfarers taking 'Upward' as its slogan (like 'Forward' for Pathfinders), alert us to two more of the cultural agencies for Christian 'upliftment' and 'respectable' self-improvement which have contributed to social differentiation in the African community. They increased the social distance between certain school children, themselves a minority of a minority, and the mass of the African population. The black leaders were an elite anyhow. Cook, after detailed statistical analysis of paternal occupations, concluded that 'a very large proportion of student teachers' were drawn 'from a small economically privileged class'.[88] Teachers passed on, through Wayfarers, the aspirations towards self-improvement and upward mobility which their

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87 M. Legassick, 'Legislation, Ideology and Economy in Post-1948 South Africa', JSAS, 1, 1 (Oct. 1974), 22; S. Marks, 'The Ambiguities of Dependence: John Dube of Natal', JSAS, 1, 2 (April 1975), 173, 180.

88 P. A. W. Cook, The Native Student Teacher (Pretoria, 1940), 45. For an extreme example of the single-minded, materialistic self-improvement abhorred by Black Consciousness, see the repellent elite in M. Brandel-Syrier, 'Coming Through', (Johannesburg, 1978).

own social position embodied.

'Adaptation' was similarly an ambivalent concept. White Guides looked down on Wayfaring as having lower standards in its simplification and modification of Guiding for black girls, while it appears as though by the thirties, the Anglican African girls in Sophiatown similarly thought it an inferior version of the world movement. On the other hand, the Anglican Reef Wayfarer Superintendent, though she felt compelled to give in to her compatriots' stand, was 'all against' the move to Guides: she considered that African girls were not hankering after anything else and Wayfaring 'fitted them better'. In her view, it was more difficult to fulfil the aims of the movement once the Anglicans had been incorporated into the Guide movement, as the white Guide Commissioners were not as conscientious about visiting their members as missionaries had been.[89] The affection, interest and enthusiasm of white Wayfarer leaders is well documented, as is the girls' enjoyment of the games, songs and adolescent sociability. The retention of a separate association may well have ensured its members more attention.

Finally, the sex-specific impact of these supplements to mission education demands consideration. The 'vocational, domestic and subservient' stress of nineteenth century schooling of African girls[90] can be detected in Wayfaring, with its conscious attempt to adapt Guiding to Africans; its stress on supposedly female skills like knitting, sewing and child-care; its badges for cooking, laundry and housework, such as might equip a

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89 Interview, F. Chilton.

90 Cock, Maids & Madams, 305.

domestic servant. At the same time, however, it encouraged intellectual development through rudimentary nursing training and the imparting of, for instance, interpreting skills and Scriptural knowledge. The GWA also trained African women leaders: by 1964, over three thousand headed Wayfarer detachments. Numerous African women, that year's report commented, 'in responsible positions today received their early training in this movement'.[91] As far more girls than boys were involved in Christian youth movements, which was possibly true also of Sunday school,[92] the beginnings of the importance which religion had in many African women's lives may have to be sought in this formative school period. That would make Sunday schools and Wayfaring two of the roots of that female numerical dominance of the black mission churches which was well established throughout South Africa by the 1950's.

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91 Girl Wayfarers' Association, Annual Report (1964).

92 Three-quarters of the girls in their final year at primary school in South Africa attended Sunday school, compared with two-thirds of the boys, P. A. W. Cook, The Native Std. VI Pupil (Pretoria, 1939), 79; Wayfarers had 30,000 members throughout Southern Africa in 1935, double Pathfinders'. See WUL, AD843, B25.1, 'Pathfinder Movement', 'The Wayfarer Movement'.

CHAPTER 8

EKUTULENI AND LESEDING

Under the leadership of Anglican missionary Dorothy Maud, two 'Settlement Houses' were built in African areas of Johannesburg, Ekutuleni (Zulu for The House of Peace) in Sophiatown in 1928 and Leseding (Sotho for The House of Light) in Orlando in 1935. By the late 1930's they housed at any one time perhaps a dozen white women missionaries and served as centres of intensive social and spiritual work among over three thousand African children. Even considered apart from the Reef medical and baby clinics and the Princess Alice Nursing Home with which they were loosely linked for a decade,[1] Ekutuleni and Leseding represent the most substantial and widely publicised initiative by Anglican women missionaries on the Witwatersrand - perhaps even in South Africa - in the entire period under review. They also signalled the first new departure institutionally for such women in twenty years, since the founding of the Girls' Hostel and St. Agnes' School. No other contemporary Reef African mission had so many white women concentrated in full-time work; the deployment of several white priests in African parishes as late as the mid-1930's was also unusual. Thus the dimensions of this 'settlement' effort alone suggest that it merits investigation.

In addition, the location of the two houses in the increasingly populous Western Areas of the city and in what became the nucleus of Soweto, means their history illuminates Anglican missionary attitudes towards permanently settled urban African families. It also shows how the possible sphere of influence among such families on the part of single women

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1 Lack of space regrettably precludes detailed consideration of Anglican and ABM medical work among women and children. I plan to pursue this topic elsewhere.

missionaries had by that time effectively narrowed to children. In their concentration on the young, Ekutuleni and Leseding were very much of a piece with Reef-wide missionary initiatives of the inter-war decades discussed in the previous chapter, although their attention to club work and nursery schools was distinctive, harking back to the unique inspiration they drew from the university settlements among the urban poor in England. Indeed, that women missionaries deliberately took up residence in African areas of Johannesburg in the very years when the city was implementing residential segregation, and quite against the trend of white missionary practice, is perhaps the most striking aspect of the whole affair, attributable to very specific English theological and social influences which acquired fresh relevance in the particular configuration of racial and class tensions on the Reef in the late 1920's. The significance of these settlements for their residents, the Africans they tried to reach, and the whites of Johannesburg at large, forms part not simply of the social history of the city, but also of any account of the relationship between white missionaries and liberals and urban African society in South Africa.

Ekutuleni began as an offshoot of the town ministry of St. Cyprian's Native Mission in Anderson Street, the oldest Anglican African congregation on the Reef and the only one not under the supervision of the Community of the Resurrection after the Boer War. Its members were described by the African priest who assisted Rev. C. B. Shaw as 'people who work in the kitchens, mines and doing washing'.[2] Shaw was succeeded in November 1923 by the vicar of fashionable white Parktown. Wilfrid Parker's relative youth (he was forty), personal warmth and openness to inter-racial contact[3] must

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2 CPSA, AB 627, St. Cyprian's Church Building Committee Minute Book, 19 March 1916.

3 CPSA, AB 627, St. Cyprian's Church Council Minute Book, 27 April 1921, 5 Dec. 1923.

have recommended him to Bishop Karney. Despite his very aristocratic English ancestry, he rejected several good job offers to stay on until 1931 in the slum district in which St. Cyprian's was situated. He welcomed the fact that 'one knows one is wanted'[4] and whereas Karney pronounced Shaw 'of a retiring disposition and the work was beyond him at the end', Parker was soon '"gingering things up" considerably'.[5] His letters are full of enjoyment of the personal contacts with Africans which the job brought, as well as appreciation of African religious fervour and their far greater participation in church life.

Parker grasped immediately the threat to his congregation posed by the Urban Areas Act passed in the year of his appointment to St. Cyprian's Mission. If the bulk of town Africans were moved to locations, 'the Church would be left high and dry with no resident population round it'. He was also concerned that barely a quarter of the more than four hundred day school pupils attended St. Cyprian's Sunday school. That he, within a year, considered a full-time woman worker as perhaps the Mission's greatest need, confirms the way in which such religious work with children was conventionally assigned to women across the denominations. (The Anglican women at Buxton Street gave Parker some part-time assistance).[6] Parker addressed the problem of residential segregation by building a church, St. Mary Magdalen's, in the largely working class African freehold area of Sophiatown[7] four miles west of the city centre in late 1925. An African priest, Rev. Masoleng,

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4 CPSA, fAB 287, 'A Bishop's Scrap-book', which also details his family background.

5 USPG, D, Karney to Secretary, 25 June 1924.

6 USPG, E, W. Parker, 1923, Jan. 1925 (filed 1924).

7 On the nature of this suburb, see Proctor, 'Sophiatown', and T. Lodge, 'The Destruction of Sophiatown', Wits History Workshop, 1981.

and his wife were installed by January 1926; soon the church was at times overcrowded.[8] By 1928, women missionaries recruited by Parker were at work in Sophiatown, and St. Cyprian's school's enforced removal there helped expand the church into a mission station. The Anglicans had thirty-six 100' X 50' stands in Sophiatown by 1930; Parker dreamed of 'a great church crowning the kopje' and dominating the whole area.[9]

In September 1924 Parker wrote to Dorothy Maud of his need for a woman worker. She had applied to the SPG to become a missionary in March that year, and hoped to be sent to South Africa, with whose church life her family had extensive historical links.[10] Two of her referees emphasised her potential as an ideologue for missions and a shaper of white opinion. E. K. Talbot, the CR Superior at Mirfield, and brother of the then Bishop of Pretoria, commented that her 'gift for presenting the missionary cause and claim' was 'markedly exceptional...in many ways unique' though her energy was such that 'she might make too hot a pace for most mortals to follow'. Dorothy's uncle, Michael Furse, Bishop of Pretoria 1909-20, was more specific about an aspect which would count in the Johannesburg he knew: 'She seems to me to have a peculiar gift of being able to get white folk, and perhaps those especially of her own class, to listen to the appeal for the missionary enterprise of the Church.' It was a plan which took this factor as well as Parker's need into account which won over the Women Candidates' Secretary. Osmund Victor, CR Provincial Superior in Johannesburg,

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8 CPSA, AB 627, St. Cyprian's Church Council Minute Book, 16 Sept. 1925, 16 Feb. 1926; USPG, E, St. Cyprian's Native Mission, Johannesburg, Sept. 1926.

9 W. Parker, 'St. Cyprian's Mission, Johannesburg', The Mission Field, (Jan. 1930), 7-12; USPG, E, St. Cyprian's News No. 10 May 1930 (filed 1929).

10 Her father, brother-in-law and uncle had all worked there.

after meeting Dorothy at a GDA Week he led at Eden Hall School in Cumberland in October 1924, proposed to offer her 'full scope...for those special gifts of which she has given evidence in England'. He saw her role, after a year's 'native work', as one of liaison between black and white, which constituted 'a new untouched and most promising field for activity and for her own particular powers'. He even envisaged her, as missionary propagandist and inter-racial communicator, being 'free to travel over the Union as occasion serves and as demands arise'. Bishop Karney endorsed the request.[11]

Clearly then, Dorothy Maud's appointment was expected to issue in more than routine missionary maintenance of existing institutions, and these expectations were fulfilled. After her year at missionary college, Miss Maud spent 1926 at Kwamagwaza Anglican Mission in Zululand learning Zulu, and 1927 attached to St. Cyprian's Mission, assisting in the town centre and travelling out to St. Mary Magdelen's in Sophiatown. When she concluded that actually living in the Western Areas would make her work more effective, she was able to fulfil Karney's preconditions for agreement, as two women volunteered to join her for keep only, a friend gave a car, and the diocese was spared expense since, with the help of the Maud parents, several thousand pounds were raised over the next two years. A stand was bought at the top of Meyer Street, Sophiatown, near the Masoleng's house, the foundation stone was laid on 9 September 1928, Dorothy moved in on 27 December, and in February 1929 Ekutuleni was officially opened.[12]

a) <u>The Settlement Ideal in a Racially Segregated Class Society</u>

Ekutuleni's characterisation as a 'Settlement House' even from the

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11 All quotations from correspondence in USPG Dossier 2361, which also details her public speaking experience.

12 Ekutuleni Papers, List of dates. Unless otherwise indicated, manuscript, typescript and pamphlet material referred to below, together with annual reports, is from this collection gathered by Clare Lawrance, retired Ekutuleni missionary. Ashley's biography of Dorothy, <u>Peace-Making in South Africa</u>, used this too.

planning stage when it lacked a name, merits investigation. It shared certain tenets with those 'experiments in religious and social action' begun with Toynbee Hall in London's East End, 'conducted by people who accepted a responsibility as Christians and gentlemen to live for a time among the urban working classes'.[13] The common terminology provides a fascinating example of the translation of class attitudes formed in England into the racial categories of South Africa's divided society. The West End's harmful alienation from and indifference to the East had its counterpart in the hosility between white and black in South Africa, which similarly threatened and undermined the social order. The residence of the more privileged amongst the less, 'to make a social peace' in the words of Toynbee Hall's Canon Barnett,[14] was the solution proposed in both cases, except that in Johannesburg the economic inequalities overlapped with racial categories.

Why should a social and religious initiative originating in London in the 1880's have been suggested for Sophiatown nearly half a century later, when its great age was past in England? Dorothy Maud did not herself have any experience of work in the London settlements.[15] Yet an address she gave shortly before going out to South Africa clearly envisaged a kind of settlement:

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13 K. Inglis, Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (London, 1963), 143. By 1913 there were twelve settlements in England focusing on social responsibility alone, and another thirty-two with an additional evangelistic emphasis, ibid., 162.

14 J. A. R. Pimlott, Toynbee Hall (London, 1935), 142.

15 SOAS, M 4581, Evidence of Maud to the Native Economic Commission, 7617. It is worth noting that the movement overseas was dominated (roughly three-quarters) by women's settlements by the time Ekutuleni was founded: Pimlott, Toynbee Hall, 278-81; R. A. Woods and A. J. Kennedy, The Settlement Horizon (New York, 1922), 430.

> ...may it not be that one day there may be a house in Johannesburg to which whole time workers might go from England, some to do whole time work with natives, some to do Sunday School work and work with children, some to do social service work? Is it a vain dream to see such a holy home growing up in Johannesburg to which white business girls might come and live, going out to their ordinary work by day with the background of a real home behind them, and perhaps one night a week giving their services either to black or white in this great ministry?[16]

It seems likely that her uncle helped evolve the scheme. A typescript among the Mission's papers mentions that, around 1913, a small group of church people 'dreamed of a House of Peace, where some women might live together under a common rule of life, and work for South Africa'.[17] Perhaps Furse, then Bishop of Pretoria, was among them. Certainly, his much later description situating her contribution seems to hark back to a similar plan:

> It was to tackle that problem [of detribalised African families living in locations and working for the white man] that "Ek" came into existence... It was really the same problem, only on a larger and worse scale, which in this country over sixty years ago called into existence school and college missions and settlements in the East End of London and other industrial centres, and made the "West" at least not wholly unconsciousof its moral obligation to the "East". Why shouldn't some of those young educated women who, through the Girls Diocesan Association and other similar bodies, were working in the "East End" Settlements in England come and do the same work in and for the native slums of Johannesburg? The idea was suggested to Dorothy Maud. She didn't turn it down - but at the time it seemed clear that her duty was to "stay put" at home.[18]

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16 Church Militant Supplement (15 Feb. 1926), No. 2, xxvi-xxvii. The combination of regular employment and part-time social service was frequent in English settlements; residents of Ekutuleni were, all but one, full-time missionaries.

17 WUL, fAB 396, 'Ekutuleni - The House of Peace. The Ways of the House - 1928'.

18 Peace-Making in Johannesburg [1944?], 2. Maud's candidate's papers confirm that such a delay in taking up her missionary vocation occurred.

As an Eton schoolboy and an Oxford student, Furse had had personal experience of two East End missions and was much influenced by the Head of Oxford House, the settlement established in Bethnal Green as Toynbee Hall's religious counterpart. This all dated from the first generation, the most religious phase, of the movement in England. Settlements were also very much part of the conceptual baggage of Dorothy's 'boss' in Johannesburg, Wilfrid Parker, another Oxford graduate. He was assistant priest to his college Mission in Poplar in 1908, and a close friend of Dick Sheppard, who was on the Oxford House staff for several years. Thus, in working out her plans, Dorothy was being advised by a priest with experience of the second generation of the settlement movement as well; to both men, a settlement was an appropriate response by the church to an alienated urban proletariat.[19]

It was not part of the social theory behind English settlements that class differences should be ignored or removed. The Houses were to re-establish a right class relationship, overcoming bitterness and division by their gesture of friendship and their efforts for social improvement. As Barnett said in 1906:

> My faith still holds that it is the contact of rich and poor - the neighbourly intercourse of university and working men - which will form the healthy public opinion in which good laws can be made and obeyed...The important thing surely is not that the poor shall be exalted, but that rich and poor shall equally feel the joy of their being, and live together in peace and good will.[20]

The settlement's social aim was expressed more politically by a later generation, but shared that assumption that the interests of rich and poor were not inherently antagonistic; if both learnt their lessons, society would operate in some sort of smooth equilibrium which would not dislodge

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19 M. Furse, Stand Therefore! (London, 1953), 21-5, 41-2; C. Scott, Dick Sheppard: a biography (London, 1977), 30-51.

20 Pimlott, Toynbee Hall, 92-4; Inglis, Churches, 171.

either class: 'An educated and politically conscious working class and a socially conscious upper class were indispensable pre-requisites of the democratic state. Toynbee Hall was established for the education of both.' As one critic acidly remarked, the settlement notion presupposed 'that the rich were as necessary as the poor - indeed, that nothing must ever be done to hurt the good-hearted rich who keep such places as Toynbee Hall going out of their ill-gotten gains'.[21]

Dorothy Maud shared this presupposition. She believed that the inherent generosity of rich white Johannesburg was held back only by ignorance and would be released once the worst abuses the poor suffered were seen at first hand.[22] In fighting for material improvements for Sophiatown Africans, she acknowledged that they had cause for bitterness in their treatment at the hands of government and municipality, but she did not challenge the economic privilege of white Johannesburg, which had as its obverse, African poverty and deprivation. It appears that she considered it enough if whites were kind-hearted and showed the conscience of the rich by financial and other help, just as English settlements aimed to awaken the upper classes to their moral duty. Her model society was an ordered, harmonious entity, in which each individual, Africans included, would be purposeful in service to 'mankind and one's own country through happy, worthy work', able to develop his potential to the full and spend his leisure time wholesomely.[23] Her ideas echo that philosophy behind late Victorian social involvement of 'a moralized capitalism through which the highest potentialities of mankind were to be developed'.[24]

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21 Pimlott, Toynbee Hall, 43; George Lansbury, quoted in Inglis, Churches, 173.

22 M. Leeke in SWM Journal (April 1944).

23 Ekutuleni The Place of Peace (1928).

24 G. Stedman-Jones, Outcast London (Harmondsworth, 1976), 7.

The settlement residents asked the East End, an Oxford House leader explained, 'not to judge the educated classes by the absentees to whom they pay rent and render work, but to accept them as their truer representatives'.[25] Similarly Ekutuleni in effect asked urban Africans to judge whites by their 'truer representatives', Christian missionaries, and renounce bitterness in favour of cooperation. Racial rather than class phraseology was used as the classes which had to be reconciled had racial correlates which were then taken to be their most distinctive feature. Ekutuleni's foundation stone included the text asserting the unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ: 'He is our PEACE...that HE might create in Himself of the twain one new man.' The implication was that a new racial unity was possible through Christ. As Dorothy Maud explained on several occasions, Ekutuleni aimed to get Africans 'to look away from all that makes for bitterness towards Christ, the only Peacemaker' and to act as pioneering leaders 'on the only way that will bring true peace to Africa - the way that seeks satisfaction not in aggression, but in surrender, taking as hero not Chaka but Simon of Cyrene /the African who carried Christ's cross/.' It aimed to put before the people such ideals 'that happy service of Africa may oust bitterness, and good fellowship with each other destroy discontent'.[26]

Ekutuleni's emphasis on inter-racial cooperation must be understood not simply as a transposition of English settlement ideals of class harmony into the racial and economic divisions of Johannesburg society, but also as a product of the Joint Council movement, which wanted black and white

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25 Quoted in Inglis, Churches, 158.

26 D. Maud, 'Daughters of the Golden City', Journal of the Royal African Society (Oct. 1933); '"Ekutuleni" A hope and a venture', South African Outlook (Jan. 1934), 12; Orlando: 'Why have we no shepherd?'.

to 'cooperate to avoid conflict'.[27] Parker, like Karney and later Dorothy Maud and Raymond Raynes, was a member of the Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Africans. Parker's explanation of Ekutuleni's role had the distinctive stamp of the 1920's. He saw it 'playing much the same part as Aggrey', who had been the 'perfect interpreter' of the European to the African and vice versa, and 'in this way the evil spirit of ignorance, prejudice and racial hatred, will one day be cast out and replaced by the spirit of good-will, sympathy and racial respect'.[28] The influence of the biography of Aggrey, first published in May 1929, a few months before Parker wrote, was clearly crucial, rather than simply memories of Aggrey's pivotal share in launching the Joint Council movement in 1921, for Smith called the section on Aggrey's participation in the Phelps Stokes Commission (which had brought the American-educated West African to South Africa), 'The Interpreter'. It was this biography again which was quoted virtually word for word (unacknowledged) in a later classic rationale of Ekutuleni's foundation:

> Like Professor Aggrey (perhaps the greatest of Africa's Christian sons) it stands not for Amalgamation; not for Conflict; but for Cooperation. Aggrey used to say: 'You can play some sort of tune on the White keys and you can play some sort of a tune on the Black keys, but for Harmony you must use both the Black and the White'.[29]

There is little evidence, though, of the imbibing of Smith's apt reflections on Aggrey's teaching that love is stronger than hate, and submission to insult the way to victory:

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27 J. D. Rheinallt Jones, 'The Joint Council Movement', in J. D. Taylor (ed.), Christianity and the Natives of South Africa (Lovedale, 1928), 153.

28 Ekutuleni The Place of Peace (1929).

29 Africa Awakes (1949?). Cf. E. W. Smith, Aggrey of Africa (London, 1932), 123.

> It is not for white men to preach this doctrine to the black; coming from members of the dominant race exhortations to meekness sound like asking them to be servile, and in the absence of just dealing are no more than nauseous hypocrisy.

'Where one side gives and the other receives there is no co-operation in /Aggrey's/ sense of the term', observed Smith. 'True co-operation involves a certain measure of equality, equality of opportunity if not of actual political status'.[30] It is very striking how the women missionaries of Ekutuleni and Leseding emphasise in their recollections the loyalty of African co-workers and proteges to them as whites,[31] and use freedom from racial bitterness almost as the acid test of worth or Christian maturity. African loyalty was not only personally supportive in the more intimate contact resident missionaries had with the community; it appeared to prove that Christian inter-racial 'interpreters' could educate Africans out of hostility.

A House of Peace presupposes the existence of strife. As in England, the settlement houses in Johannesburg did not address a merely geographical alienation of rich from poor, white from black. Dorothy Maud was working 'towards the peaceful building up of a great S. Africa rather than the bitterness and revolt which threaten the peace and prosperity of all sections out here'. The late 1920's witnessed renewed self-assertion by Africans on the Reef. In 1926 the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) of Clements Kadalie made Johannesburg its headquarters, as did the African National Congress and the Communist Party of South Africa round that time. Expressing hostility to liberals and missionaries, the ICU caused a great stir, in rural areas particularly. By 1928, despite

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30 Smith, Aggrey, 134, 126. Compare Maud, n.26 above, on the way of surrender. Of course, she did work for more 'just dealing'.

31 See 'Harry Madibane', 'Elias Diale', and 'Sally'.

the purging of an increasingly militant left wing, it had clearly become a popular, disparately based movement of considerable importance, claiming 86,000 members. Government policy towards Africans at this time was hardly peaceable. The Colour Bar Bill was passed in 1926, excluding Africans from various skilled and semi-skilled trades, while the same year prime minister Hertzog published his four Native Bills, which included the proposed dismantling of the Cape African vote. In June 1929, a few months after Ekutuleni opened, the 'Black Peril' election reiterated the Hertzog government's commitment to white domination, while legislation in 1927 and 1930 (Riotous Assemblies Act) increased the penalties which could be invoked against leaders of African protest.[32]

Africans in the diocese of Johannesburg were also more insistent in airing their grievances in these years. Black clergy wanted greater independence from European control and demanded lay representation in Synod on the same basis as the whites.[33] Karney pronounced them 'certainly difficult to handle'; by 1927, leading African Anglicans were being affected by the ICU's 'preaching of hatred', as the bishop termed it, though he claimed not to be surprised at their loss of trust in whites after so many past miscarriages of justice.[34] St. Cyprian's itself, in Dorothy's first year there, experienced inter-racial friction which filled her with

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32 CPSA, fAB 396, 'Ekutuleni, an adventure in Peacemaking. For G.D.A. Review July/29'. On this period see T. R. H. Davenport, South Africa: A Modern History (London, 1977), 205-212; E. Roux, Time Longer Than Rope (2nd ed., Madison, 1964), 158-79; P. L. Wickins, The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa (Cape Town, 1978), Chs. 7 and 8.

33 See Parker's articles in the Church Times, 5 Nov. 1920, 4 Nov. 1921, CPSA, fAB 272. The Bishop admitted the current proportions were absurd: five lay African representatives for their nine thousand communicants, while six thousand whites had a hundred; The Transvaal Missions, (Jan. 1923), 4.

34 CPSA, AB 838, Karney's newsletters, 7 Feb. 1923, 19 July 1927.

foreboding. The African church council, among the few in existence and jealous of its rights, objected that Parker's appointment of a white deacon over their heads amounted to treating them as children. Several 'most unpleasant manifestations' of anti-white feeling ensued.[35]

The tensions of the late 1920's on the Reef were aptly personified in three guests Maud noted at the laying of Ekutuleni's foundation stone: Ballenden, the new Johannesburg Native Affairs manager, Ballinger of the ICU, 'the rather agitating Native Trades Union', and her 'dear American friend, Mr. Phillips'.[36] These men represented respectively, the new municipal awareness, energy and regulation being brought to bear on permanent urban African residents; the looming confrontation between reformist trade unionism and more broadly based, if less coherent, protest; and the best known social expression of the Joint Council desire to win over educated Africans, the Bantu Men's Social Centre. The Sophiatown settlement house derived its justification for peace-making in the context of such developments.

Residence among the urban poor was the 'indispensable requirement'[37] of settlement. Its promotion was predicated on the geographical separation of rich and poor. But in South Africa the very legislation which unscrambled the racially and socially mixed town centre of Johannesburg, the Urban Areas Act, which set up locations and cleared Africans from the yards of Doornfontein, was calculated simultaneously to prohibit blacks from living in white areas and vice versa. Urban segregation made settlements both an appropriate and an impossible response. It was only Sophiatown's anomalous

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35 CPSA, AB 748/C03, Church Council Minute Book, 13 July 1927, 4 Aug. 1927; USPG, E, St. Cyprian's News, Nov. 1927.

36 Maud newsletter, 9 Sept. 1928.

37 A. F. Davis, Spearheads for Reform. The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement 1890-1914 (New York, 1967), 16.

position as a racially mixed freehold area which enabled Maud to buy land and live there. Social connections were exploited to the full to sidestep the Act in order to build in Orlando, a municipal location, (Lord Clarendon, Governor General, paid the Johannesburg mayor a special visit), and then to get as close as possible when that failed. Through an Ekutuleni committee member, Maud contacted a company director owning land on the far side of the location fence, and was given two acres freehold. Although at first two miles from the nearest houses, Leseding was by 1937, as a result of further municipal building, virtually in the location despite the prohibitions; it occupied a narrow neck of land between Orlando West and Orlando East. For a while, tenure appeared precarious, but the women said that 'nothing short of an act of Parliament' would get them out and the municipality eventually decided not to expropriate the property.[38]

Clearly, persistence was required in order to fulfil the residential ideal. Despite the way university students and graduates had staffed settlements overseas, it is not surprising, then, that the suggestion made after the inter-racial 1930 Students Christian Association conference at Lovedale was not taken up:

> Is it not time also that some real start was made in the direction of Settlement Work by students in Bantu townships. We have talked about it in S.C.A. circles from time to time for more than twenty years. Who is going to make the start?[39]

The scandalised white reaction to the 'mixed' rugby at the conference[40] confirmed how much more culture-bound South African-born whites were than some foreign missionaries; racial prejudice made it improbable that a move for such students to actually live in African areas would win support.

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38 Orlando Log. Ts (D. Maud), 'How Leseding began'; Maud newsletter, 11 Nov. 1938; Orlando Log, 26 Nov. 1937, 20 May and 7 July 1938.

39 Christian Students and Modern South Africa (Alice, 1930), 228.

40 A. Paton, Hofmeyr, (London, 1964), 172-3.

There was furthermore a theological barrier. The SCA in the late 1920's, to the regret of old members like Rheinallt Jones who would have liked to harness it for reformism, did not provide 'the necessary platform for any appeal on social questions', and touched only the fringe of the students, largely because of its identification with 'Fundamentalism in its most rigorous form'.[41] Fundamentalism is notorious for its political quietism, whereas the High Church Anglicanism of Parker, Maud and Raynes had historical links with Christian Socialism, and was far less hesitant about social activism.[42]

The geographical location of their homes was not irrelevant to the reception accorded missionaries. Some urban African Christians in the 1920's, no doubt idealising the past, lamented the demise of the old rural missionary in intimate contact with his flock. As 'our present white clergy have not grown up amongst natives and are not living in native villages like the old missionaries', one warned, Africans would get the 'bad impression that all white people are against them'.[43] Urban missionaries were sensitive to the image projected by their homes too, though sometimes urging improvement in a more self-regarding or peer-conscious fashion:

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41 SOAS, IMC 1230, File A, Rheinallt Jones to J. R. Oldham, 26 Feb. 1926.

42 On Christian Socialism see G. C. Binyon, The Christian Socialist Movement in England (London,1931) and M. B. Reckitt, Maurice to Temple (London, 1947). However, note Binyon's comment (179) about the Christian Social Union (to which Furse once belonged and of which Gore, founder of the CR, was president 1902-11). For many of its later members, the 'Christian law' which was to rule social practice 'meant little more than a "Christian", kindly, considerate, spirit in the relations created by the structure of capitalist society, or at most social reforms or non-political schemes such as profit-sharing'.

43 CPSA, AB 627, St. Cyprian's Church Council Minute Book, Mr. Choolo, 27 Sept. 1922.

> Having this small house gives the Natives the idea that we are a poor denomination compared with other churches...Natives have to see me in the kitchen and when cooking or washing is on we have a bad time all round. If I ask the Natives into the dining-room some European is sure to call and the room has to be cleared before he enters - otherwise we would find our work bitterly opposed.[44]

British and American settlements were generally the preserve of the young and single; they found it very difficult to cater for married couples. It is not surprising to find that Johannesburg missionary families lived in white suburbs, though certainly not in the most affluent areas. The Phillips family, for instance, lived first in Jeppe, then in Fairview; despite this residential segregation, they had fairly frequent meetings and social evenings for African teachers and other leaders in their home. Although single Anglican women missionaries lived throughout this period in racially mixed and gradually deteriorating Doornfontein, this seems to have been purely for its convenient centrality and not with any conscious neighbourly settlement motive. That the single women from the American Board and the Methodist Church lived in white suburbs, each with a woman friend, should be attributed to the fact of their solitary appointment as well as to the different religious and class background from which they came. The only other woman missionary of my sample to live in an African township was Ruth Cowles, who nursed in Alexandra from the late 1930's. Apart from the obvious Christian zeal, energy and gaiety of spirit she shared with Dorothy Maud, it is surely not without relevance that, prior to her departure for South Africa, she spent some weeks of intensive training in district nursing at the Henry Street Settlement in New York. This was among the three best known American settlements.[45] None of the

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44 MMS 1141, A. Kidwell, Dec. 1917, 27 Nov. 1918; ABC: 15.4 v.30, Bridgman to Dr. Barton, 3 May 1912, also shows sensitivity to white views.

45 ABC: 6 v.92, 'Life Sketch' in Ruth Cowles's application.

other ABM women missionaries had had such contact. The Settlement idea, then, lacked resonance for those unacquainted with it personally or by tradition, which further explains South African student indifference to it.

Toynbee Hall in its architecture and organisation was an Oxford college transplanted to Whitechapel; the first American women's settlements were reminiscent of the cottage system of residence at Smith and Wellesley colleges.[46] Not having been to university, Dorothy Maud made Ekutuleni a home from home. Her care of her staff was almost maternal, while Ekutuleni's companionable partnership with the CR monks provided 'the best type of Christian fellowship and the best type of an English Home', in one Father's nostalgic estimation.[47] The house itself was a large double storey with five bedrooms, sitting room, offices and chapel, with clubroom and playground close by. Margery Perham visited there in 1929:

> /It/ looks very clean and modern, standing on top of the stony outcrop of a little kopje, which gives it a sense of light and space in those oppressive surroundings. Inside it is Oxford-English to the last bit of china, with gay London Underground posters, homespun curtains and Medici prints. A cheerful crowd of women in bright linen aprons were preparing a Sunday School party, calling out to each other by their Christian names, all very happy and united.[48]

Those who had at first told Dorothy it was 'rash and fanatical' to live in Sophiatown, criticised Ekutuleni as 'too comfortable and pretty' for a mission house. The place was furnished 'tastefully and well...quite deliberately, as part of their mission, in order that the native girls may learn to appreciate what is good'.[49] Leseding was also a spacious building,

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46 Davis, Spearheads, 7, 31; J. P. Rousmaniere, 'Cultural Hybrid in the Slums: the College Woman and the Settlement House 1889-1894', American Quarterly, XXII, 1 (Spring 1970).

47 Joan Hunter, 'Martha and my rememberances /sic/ of Ek & Leseding'; M. Trelawney-Ross to M. Leeke, 5 March 1948 (original in Orlando Log).

48 M. Perham, African Apprenticeship (London, 1974), 143.

49 Ekutuleni The Place of Peace (1929); C.R. No. 124 (1933), 18.

though single storeyed, again with a carefully tended garden. The identification with the African urban poor was residential rather than material; it did not go as far as, for example, the Anglican priest Michael Scott, who lived in a shanty in the Tobruk camp with the other squatters in 1947.

Barbara Tredgold (sister of Sir Robert Tredgold, Chief Justice of the Central African Federation 1955-60), who worked at Ekutuleni for some eleven years before founding a similar venture in Harari, Salisbury, explained decades later that the Mission felt called to model the place, though simply, on conditions the staff were used to, to show 'a way of life which was possible for any whose improving economic state could make better living a reality'. In effect, Ekutuleni was to be an example to aspiring self-improvers, its size hopefully no barrier to other Sophiatown residents living in 'the small crowded houses, the squalid yards, the dark rooms'.[50]

b) The Focus on Children

'The children are our great hope and unfailing joy', asserted Dorothy Maud in 1929.[51] Parker had clearly wanted her for his Mission in order to reach school children and teenage girls more effectively. Maud's youth - she was thirty in 1924 - and her experience working among the servant girls in the vicinity of her Kensington home and factory girls making munitions during the war,[52] as well as with the upper middle class GDA members, no doubt confirmed her suitability. At Kwamagwaza in 1926 she started a Wayfarer detachment; the next year at St. Cyprian's she put new life into the Sunday school, 'bossed up' the Wayfarers there and started a new detachment in Sophiatown, ran two small clubs for girls, superintended the

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50 B. Tredgold, 'Ekutuleni'.

51 CPSA, fAB 396, 'Ekutuleni Sophiatown'.

52 SOAS, M 4581, Maud to Native Economic Commission, 7617.

needlework at the school, produced a Christmas play (taken round the compounds with Phillips's help), and did a lot of visiting. In 1928 she started a club near the gate of Western Native Township, the municipal township adjoining Sophiatown; Ballenden lent her a cottage for a playroom and children 'loaf/ing/ about with nothing better to do than pick up cigarette ends and gamble with pennies' were drawn into games of football and netball.[53] As Maud explained, it was no longer enough for the modern missionary to have a Bible and an umbrella; an 'unfailing stock' of sports equipment, dolls and toys was now essential. Her work as she then described it was the same amalgam of spiritual instruction and very English recreational activities continued by Ekutuleni and Leseding:

> Teach small people how to pray: take confirmation classes: teach the same people how to dance 'Sir Roger de Coverley': how to catch balls: how to skip: how to make dolls' furniture out of match boxes: how to make scrap books: teach larger sizes of girls how to read their Bibles: how to do country dancing: how to sing rounds: how to act plays: how to make church kneelers out of oddments: how to play netball: how to bandage cuts.[54]

Club work had become the foremost activity of British settlements[55] but Maud was probably even more influenced by the current lively interest in Reef mission circles in recreational provision for African children, 'believed to be essential if children were to be protected from the temptations of unoccupied leisure in a materialistic town'. She often stressed the undesirability of leaving Africans '(cut off as they are from all their tribal life and sanctions) to copy whatever is most flashy and

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53 USPG, E, St. Cyprian's News, Nov. 1927, Aug. 1928; Ekutuleni The Place of Peace (1928).

54 D. Maud, 'An Adventure in peacemaking', SPG Overseas, No. 41 (Fourth Quarter 1930), and 'The Church at Play in Johannesburg', Mission Field (Feb. 1929), 33.

55 Pimlott, Toynbee Hall, 258; W. Picht, Toynbee Hall and the English Settlement Movement (London, 1914), 64, and 209-48 for their work in general.

perhaps third-rate in the streets and shops of western civilisation'.[56]

Although Ekutuleni was intended to help the whole African community in Sophiatown, Maud admitted to the Native Economic Commission, 'Of course, we do not do much for the men, because they do not want to be managed by women, and the older people are more suspicious than the younger ones'.[57] The children were clearly an easier field for 'peace-making' than the adults. Although in the first months at Ekutuleni, a club committee of Sophiatown men and women settled policy and arranged a programme of events including public lectures by prominent Africans like Dr. Xuma and Selope Thema,[58] this apparently soon lapsed. Indeed, there are signs that both settlements had difficulty relating to African clergy and women church members.

There is no obvious indication in Ekutuleni records that Dorothy Maud was unhappy working in the parish of a black priest, but as no white clergy were under African superintendence at that stage, one would imagine that sex added to race bedevilled the sensitive issue of authority. The situation differed from that of other women missionaries intermittently visiting the women's meetings of a number of different churches. Here was a white woman of strong personality living permanently a stone's throw from the minister's house. Already in early 1927, before Maud moved to

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56 'Ekutuleni - An Adventure in Peacemaking', The Church Abroad (Oct. 1937), 74-5; Orlando: 'Why have we no shepherd?'

57 SOAS, M 4581, 7610a. Cf. comments on the breakdown of suspicion among the children in Ekutuleni Annual Reports (EAR), 1933 and 1938. (The Reports for 1936-9 are in the Johannesburg Public Library). When Dorothy and two African women were added to St. Cyprian's Church Council in 1927, the men did not 'really like it a bit'. Ashley, Peace-Making, 22.

58 'Ekutuleni Sophiatown, Report for the Native Conference at Potchefstroom. July 1929'.

Sophiatown, Rev. Masoleng asked Parker 'whether he had to take his orders from Miss Maud or from him'. Once in residence, Dorothy was 'nearly convulsed', presumably with amusement, when the priest, in front of a girls' group, referred to himself and Miss Maud as their father and mother. It is just possible, then, that the bishop's transfer of Masoleng to the Western Transvaal less than two years after Dorothy moved in, a transfer which so angered a section of the congregation that they refused to play host to the Native Conference that year or to raise their quota for the Bishop's Fund, had something to do with this situation so potentially delicate to both races.[59] It is very noticeable that Masoleng's successors were all white: two priests followed by the CR Fathers. In Orlando, to which the CR could not send Father Lunniss daily until 1939, the African deacon told the Leseding women in a public dispute that they were not wanted. The bishop moved him, too, to a different parish. 'We had difficult times with him', wrote Margaret Leeke of another deacon, 'as he was not used to working with women and, of course, had to get over the awful anti-white feeling which always goes on'.[60]

Dorothy Maud got off to a bad start with the women of Sophiatown. At a drawing-room meeting arranged by the wife of the editor of the Rand Daily Mail to raise money for a nursing home, she underlined the need through the case found by Dr. Tugman of 'a baby dangerously ill with pneumonia being nursed on the floor' because the washing which the mother was about to

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59 CPSA, AB 627, St. Cyprian's Church Council Minute Book, 22 April 1927; Maud newsletter, 17 Sept. 1929; USPG, E, St. Cyprian's News No. 11, Michaelmas 1930. The only reference to any incident interpreted as having sexual overtones comes in G. Ffrench-Beytagh, Encountering Darkness (London, 1973), 58. In the 1940's a devout African, in 'a moment of genuine Christian love and affection...put his arm around one of the women lay missionaries who worked with the CR. This had so frightened the silly woman that they felt they were bound to get him another job'.

60 N. Mosley, The Life of Raymond Raynes (London, 1961), 107-8; printed letter to Friends of Ekutuleni, Nov. 1945.

return to a lady in Parktown 'occupied every inch of the bed in the room'. Though this might have served to rouse Parktown women to their moral obligations, Sophiatown washerwomen feared the loss of custom and got the superintendent of Western Native Township to write to Maud requesting her to desist from such talk. At a conciliatory meeting Maud arranged, which included Anglican WHS members, for two hours 'the women poured out their indignation'.[61]

Being single deprived the Anglican missionaries of authority with African churchwomen, which served to reinforce the emphasis on children. Methodist Manyano members accepted the leadership of the white President in part because she was a married woman like themselves, and the wife of the leading minister; this was the model for most African women's religious organisations. Dorothy had to get the Congregationalist Mrs. Bridgman to talk to mothers of Wayfarers, and jested, 'The trouble is they don't like mere spinsters talking to them, so we're thinking we shall probably have to rush into matrimony in order to be listened to!' When the Mission had a very difficult time with the Mothers' Union, they got an African woman worker, a widow, to harangue them.[62] Besides, the missionaries found silence the key to true spirituality, and were out of sympathy with the spiritual 'style' of African Anglican women, with its stress on verbalised social religion and the sharing of experience through public prayer, song and testimony.[63]

Miss Maud did not ignore the women of Sophiatown. She did some preaching among 'a whole bunch of quite raw heathen Shangaan women, living

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61 Unheaded lp. Ts in 'Sister Dorothy Raphael...Notes'.

62 CPSA, AB 396, Maud newsletter, 3 July 1934; 'Julia Motsenyane (?) 1860-1960'.

63 See Ch.5, section a).

quite close here, dressed in all their bangles and anklets and beads', finding it 'most thrilling for I really could do a little primitive missionary work'. At the request of a zealous woman among them, a weekly outdoor service was subsequently held in one of the yards.[64] A further contact with adult women, at least in the first years, came through the monthly Women's Council, which was concerned with the suburb's civic well-being. It produced some good evidence for the Native Economic Commission and held a successful exhibition in 1933 to interest women in 'home crafts'. Maud's attitude towards this body was affectionately patronising. When water was secured for the area, she wrote that 'Our dear Women's Joint Council of Sophiatown all think they have brought it about, for we go through the correspondence very solemnly each month when we meet'.[65]

Apart from the black nursery school staff, the Missions did employ two African women as full-time evangelistic workers. Martha Mbele was a product of their work: a St. Cyprian's schoolgirl, keen Guide and Sunday school teacher, she started off doing the cooking at Ekutuleni. Skilled at a range of African languages and 'quite brilliant' with small children, she was taken on to the staff to prepare children for baptism, help with Sunbeams and give out government rations (160 Africans were fed weekly in 1934).[66] The elderly Julia Motsenyane went with Margaret Leeke to pioneer the work in Orlando, and stayed on there until her death in 1959. As a widowed washerwoman living in WNT, she had helped teach and interpret in the Sophiatown Sunday school. She did the same sort of work at Leseding, also taking a penitents' class and interpreting for the junior confirmation

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64 Maud newsletter, 9 Jan. 1930; Report for Synod, 1936.

65 EAR (1931); Ekutuleni Office, Johannesburg, Ekutuleni Mission Committee Minutes, 7 April 1933; Maud newsletter, 17 Sept. 1929.

66 EAR (1934).

classes. The missionaries found her 'invaluable...in helping us to understand the problems and working of the African mind'. They frequently expressed respect for her deep spirituality and appreciation of her loyalty through the years of anti-white suspicion experienced by the Orlando mission.[67]

As the foregoing discussion has attempted to illustrate, adult African Anglicans had developed, by the time Ekutuleni and Leseding were founded if not before, a certain autonomy resistant to authoritative unmarried white women. It was different with the children; friendliness replaced distrust more quickly, once the first seasonal disappointment had been surmounted. (The children who at first 'flocked into the Chapel and made their Holy Corner, and came to say their prayers', and played loudly at the Club, faded during the cold, dark, windy winter, only to reappear in the spring).[68] Ekutuleni was described in 1933 as a centre for social and missionary work 'mainly among the children who grow up in town locations'. Still based on the hope of building up friendship between the races founded on a growing knowledge of Christ the Peacemaker, the work had three clear facets in the early 1930's. First came Christian training through Sunday schools, confirmation classes, guilds for confirmed girls and classes for 'penitents' (i.e. unmarried mothers). Secondly the missionaries aimed to train up African leadership by selecting the potentially able from the detachments of Wayfarers and Sunbeams and teaching them discipline, control and an ideal of service. Finally they gave scope for recreation and healthy leisure, not just through the youth movements, but also through clubs for boys offering gym, games and boxing, while

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67 'Triomfville'; J. Hunter, 'Martha and my rememberances of Ek & Leseding'; 'Julia Motsenyane'.

68 Ekutuleni The Place of Peace (1929).

crafts, sport, dancing, singing, painting, acting, and classes in cooking, dressmaking and first aid were provided for girls. The clubs had a registered membership of 375 by 1935 and charged subscriptions; as Maud reassured friends in England, 'we are trying not to pauperise them'.[69]

Leseding replicated these models. Margery Perham drove round the Western Areas with Dorothy Maud to 'one long scream of greeting from waving children'. When Maud went over with some members of the Johannesburg Joint Council to meet the Orlando Advisory Board, children ran up saying, 'Sister, Sister, Sunday School?' So with the help of two married African women there, visiting, a Sunday school and a girls' club were started in 1934. The following year, Father Hill, Director of Native Missions, built a small school and a church with an African catechist. Leseding, built with money raised from Reef mining houses, was opened in August 1935 by Lady Clarendon and staffed by Margaret Leeke and Winifred Munton (who had been with the Mission since 1930-1), with Julia Motsenyane and later other workers. Two more children's clubs were soon begun, and at Christmas the first parties, concert and play were held, continuing the pattern established by Ekutuleni. Another Sunday school was started in Orlando in 1938, the first members being obtained

> by driving the lorry round the new streets, while a small boy hit a petrol tin with a spanner, and by calling out firm commands in as many languages as we could muster to the children to 'Come to Sunday School'.

Scouts and Guides followed, together with church guilds from 1940 for boys and girls.[70]

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69 Maud newsletter, 17 Sept. 1929; General information from EAR (1931-4) and SPG, Reports & Lists (1935), 55-6.

70 Perham, Apprenticeship, 144; Orlando Log, How Leseding Began, and 1934-5 passim.

The main new development subsequently was the setting up of nursery schools for children under five, Thabong (The Place of Joy) in Sophiatown in 1936, Dikonyaneng (The Place of Lambs) in Orlando in 1938, St. Elizabeth's in Newclare in 1940 and St. Nicholas in Orlando West in 1943. Thabong was the first day nursery established for African children on the Reef; Doreen Chaplin, its head, had spent most of her life in South Africa but went specially to the Rachel Macmillan Training College for nursery school teachers in Deptford, London, for this work. Thabong aimed to train the children in health and hygiene, and free play, give them medical supervision and teach 'independence, helpfulness and co-operation - all characteristics which are going to make for good citizenship later on'. The chairman of the Johannesburg City Council Native Affairs Committee certainly emphasised the instrumental reason - combating future delinquency - for their annual grant at the opening of Dikonyaneng: 'The well-being and safety of the Europeans depended on how the native was reared'. But, as with so many of the social welfare projects of the missionaries in the inter-war years, while the schools might be justified to white Johannesburg as in its own best interests, they were simultaneously a positive aid to African working mothers, who could be sure that for a small fee, their young children were safe the entire day, getting adequate meals, rest, play, instruction and love. In 1939 a two-year training scheme for teachers was launched with eighteen African women students; already four trained by Chaplin were running their own nursery schools, for instance in WNT for the Children's Aid Society and at Springs under the National Council of Women.[71]

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71 'Thabong Sophiatown. The first Day Nursery School for Africans'; Orlando Log, 13 March 1938, press cutting; Maud newsletter, 29 Dec. 1938; EAR (1939). When an offshoot of Ekutuleni was established in Pretoria, the African women asked for a nursery school: Ashley, Peace-Making, 89.

By the time the Second World War began, the two Anglican Missions had some 3,500 African children in their day and nursery schools; just under half that number attended their Sunday schools; perhaps half that again attended clubs or joined youth movements. The Sunday school teachers, recruited as was customary from among day school teachers and senior school pupils who had been confirmed, numbered fifty-six in Sophiatown and twenty-six for Orlando in the late 1930's. The missionaries ran weekly preparation classes for them. The academically gifted were encouraged, and helped financially, to train as teachers, doctors, nurses and priests.[72]

One Ekutuleni missionary conceded admiringly that she had 'never seen anything like the parties here for organization, and oiled wheels'. Christmas parties were the ritual climax to the year's children's activities from the very beginning, becoming an affirmatory seal and reward of the relationship between the missionaries and the children. From a couple of hundred children to be fed, entertained and given presents, the numbers skyrocketed: 900 in 1933 in Sophiatown, to 1,450 in 1934 including Orlando, while in Orlando alone by 1940, the series of parties for members of guilds, clubs, youth movements and Sunday schools catered for nearly one thousand children.[73] Annual demonstrations of white beneficence and jollity were thus a regular part of the childhood experience of hundreds of township Anglicans.

It was the clubs above all which provided contact with whites other than the missionary women. White men were roped in to run boys' clubs;

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72 EAR (1937, 1939); One of the Sunday school children helped with teacher training expenses and then Fort Hare was Sally Motlana; see 'Sally'. She later became Vice-President of the South African Council of Churches.

73 Agatha Carew-Hunt letter, 30 December; Ekutuleni Mission Committee Minutes, 6 Nov. 1933, 8 Nov. 1934; Orlando Log, 6-18 Dec. 1940.

Willie Chalmers, for instance, 'who had been a very wild Communist', helped four nights a week the first years in Sophiatown.[74] The 1934 Report lists over twenty voluntary women helpers, among them Mrs. Saul Solomon and Mrs. Lucas, whose husbands were prominent liberal lawyers, and Miss Raikes, daughter of the Witwatersrand University Principal. The involvement of Johannesburg's leisured ladies in games and classes for township children was a tribute to those personal gifts it was agreed Maud possessed, as well as to her lively awareness of the propaganda and financial value of prominent personages. Though Maud personally loathed rallies, she welcomed the attendance at one for Wayfarers of Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, the wife of the Governor General, just as she recognised the utility of speeches at the opening of the new St. Cyprian's school in 1938 by Professor Hoernle and Mrs. Deneys Reitz, MP. The Mission Committee added to its numbers in 1932, for example, Mrs. Raikes, and Lady Michael Oppenheimer, of the prominent mining family, while Mrs. Bernard Price, whose husband headed the Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company, had been approached but was unable to join.[75] Prominent overseas visitors were brought out to Sophiatown with the result that, as Mosley writes somewhat grandly,

> the visitor's book at Ekutuleni began to read like that of an English country house ('Betty Asquith', 'Violet Astor', and on a page to itself, 'Alice'). The place where a few years ago the children had put out their tongues and thrown stones, was now treated as a showplace of Africa.

Princess Alice and Dorothy Maud, comments Paton, 'though not exactly of the same rank, spoke the same kind of language'. Karney noted that the Countess 'took more and more personal interest in the native work and has

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74 Maud newsletter, 9 Jan. 1930.

75 EAR (1934); Maud newsletters, 17 Sept. 1929, 20 July 1938; Ekutuleni Mission Committee Minutes, 16 March 1932.

almost made it fashionable'. Maud had perhaps an even more cordial and fruitful relationship with Lady Clarendon, the succeeding Governor General's wife.[76]

Just as English missions and settlements consciously sought to bring upper class pupils and students in touch with working class adolescents, even organising day trips to Oxford by East End boys' clubs, so Ekutuleni and Leseding established links with the upper middle class white school children of the city. St. John's School adopted St. Cyprian's; a Christmas play by Sophiatown Africans was taken to Roedean; Doris Thompson, headmistress of another leading girls' school (Kingsmead), was a supporter, committee member and friend of Ekutuleni, sending out fifty of the pupils to mix with and visit the Little Girls Club at Orlando in 1936. During the war, weekends to 'educate' high school girls were held: for instance, twenty girls from Roedean, Kingsmead, St. Andrew's and DSG, Pretoria, came to Kingsmead for four days' study of social service for Africans, led by Sophiatown and Orlando missionaries, and were also taken to the locations, some of them following up a year later by helping with the Christmas parties.[77]

In a sense, all the activities with children for which the two Missions were responsible, served to bridge the gap or strengthen the bonds between those two well-established poles of missionary work, the school and church. Dorothy Maud always insisted on the centrality of church life and Christianity in all their labours: Sophiatown was to be a strong centre of more intensive

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76 Mosley, Raynes, 91; A. Paton, Apartheid and the Archbishop (Cape Town, 1973), 124; USPG, E, Karney newsletter, 29 Dec. 1930.

77 Maud newsletter, 10 Jan. 1936; Orlando Log, 20 April 1936; printed letter to English supporters, 1942 and 10 July 1944.

work 'with the Church & Altar as the living heart'.[78] The Missions took their rhythm from the cycle of the Christian year - preparations for Easter services, the round of children's Christmas parties, Christmas and Easter plays. Ekutuleni's work must have been hampered by the upheavals through which the Sophiatown church passed in the early years. Quite obviously women missionaries, as those explicitly excluded from any ministerial role at that time - not able to hear confession or administer the sacraments, both key functions in High Church Anglicanism, and not even free to preach as some Nonconformist women could - were extremely dependent for the spiritual outreach of the church on the quality of male priests. Even in Sunday school teaching and preparation for baptism and confirmation, women's role was preliminary or auxiliary: the natural culmination of these activities, adult church membership, was bestowed once and maintained weekly by male priests.

This meant that Bishop Clayton's decision to put Sophiatown in the care of the Community of the Resurrection was of great significance for Ekutuleni. It ensured priestly continuity and a successful identification of the Mission with a thriving Anglican church (by far the strongest mission in the suburb), as well as a corporate male counterbalance to the strong white female leadership. In December 1934 Raymond Raynes was consecrated priest in charge of Sophiatown, and came with two older members of the Community, Fathers Downton and Trelawney-Ross, to set up a priory at the top of the township hill. A fruitful partnership developed between Maud and Raynes in all the varied activities of the Mission. The new infusion of life Anglican work in the Western Areas received, especially after a

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78 USPG, E, D. Maud, 1 Nov. 1931. The Bantu Men's Social Centre, by contrast, was not linked to a local church.

large new church, Christ the King, was opened in Sophiatown in 1935, no doubt justified to Clayton the unusual step he had taken in increasing the concentration of white priests in an African residential area, rather against the tenor of his other efforts to supersede the paternalism of the Karney years.[79] Perhaps Clayton had grasped the strategic importance of the Western Areas. The population had more than doubled in six years to 26,000 with the clearing of the slum yards. Sophiatown, the CR noted, touched 'the heart of the problem of South African Christianity - the evangelisation and shepherding of the educated natives and the establishment of Christian relations between black and white members of one Catholic church'.[80] In Orlando, the connection of Leseding with church life was intimate too, although the CR were not regularly on the spot until 1939. For example, for three months before Raynes led a mission in Orlando in 1936, the Leseding women set out methodically to visit each of four thousand houses looking for church members. Making contact with Christians in Orlando West, into which three hundred families a month were pouring in 1937, was particularly tough, on account of the piercing anti-white hatred of those moved forcibly from an 'awful' part of Johannesburg 'where nothing much in the way of Church has happened and their chief occupation has been brewing'. This was Prospect Township. The people crowded into the services once the church was built, 'partly just from curiosity'.[81]

Because of the close links between the social and spiritual work of the missionaries and the day schools from which they recruited, the women

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79 On Raynes, see Mosley's excellent biography, and also M. Nuttall, 'Raymond Raynes', in R. M. de Villiers (ed.), Better Than They Knew, vol II (Cape Town, 1974), and Paton, Archbishop, Ch. 16.

80 Proctor, 'Sophiatown', 63, 69; C.R., No. 130 (1935), 11.

81 Maud newsletters 8 Jan. 1937, 11 Jan. 1938 (M. Leeke enclosure), Oct. 1937; printed letter to English supporters, 1942.

were unusually active in educational expansion, contributing their fund-raising skills and social connections to joint efforts with the CR to build and staff schools (other female missionaries left this to men). In 1935 Lady Clarendon opened the first Anglican school in Orlando, and, after taking D. L. Smit, the Secretary for Native Affairs, out there on an unofficial visit, secured rent for the Orlando classrooms and salaries for sixteen teachers there and in Sophiatown. Raynes built a church in Newclare in 1936 which doubled up as a school, but Maud wrote the financial appeals and trailed round to offices and shops; as Clayton commented, the women were 'unsurpassed as beggars'. New buildings for St. Cyprian's School, Sophiatown, and a second Orlando school followed in 1938, a third Orlando school in 1939. Attempts at school building continued right up to the time of Raynes's departure for Mirfield in 1943 to become Community Superior. After the City Council flatly refused land for a school next to Holy Cross church, Orlando West, Maud explained,

> Then we started this silly business of running round, lobbying people, wasting hours of time over a completely straightforward issue - we gave them no peace - we saw man after man - we trotted the Mayoress round - we got influential ratepayers to see for themselves, and sent them off to agitate - and finally, we asked for a deputation to the Native Affairs Committee of the Council, which the Bishop led.[82]

By the time Dorothy Maud returned to England at the end of 1943 to test her vocation as a nun, the Missions had nearly six thousand children in their schools and nursery schools.[83] It is impossible to assess in any exact way the impact of fifteen years' intensive work with African children

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82 Orlando Log, 25 Sept. 1935; EAR (1936), 4-5; USPG, E, Bishop of Johannesburg, 1936; EAR (1938); C.R., No. 148 (1939); Printed letter to English supporters, Oct. 1943.

83 2,300 at day school in Sophiatown and 350 at nursery school; the corresponding figures for Orlando were 2,500 and 400: Peace-Making in Johannesburg.

by the women missionaries of Ekutuleni and Leseding. The number of children brought within their orbit of influence was large; the contact between the white women and the black children had a regularity and familiarity more characteristic of nineteenth century rural mission stations. At a time when the juvenile population of Johannesburg was multiplying rapidly in the permanently settled urban African townships, and when it was also becoming more difficult for unmarried white women especially to exercise leadership among adult African Christians, these two Missions found a particularly appropriate ministry in evangelising and socialising the next generation. Both activities mattered. Christian instruction of young Africans, whose parents were often nominal believers or estranged from the church through marital irregularities, ensured the future of the urban church. Socialisation into norms of self-improvement, self-discipline and the 'constructive use of leisure', produced an ordered community with aspirations reconcilable with Christianity, and less disruptive of its white neighbours. The settlement ideal worked for a minority, at any rate: a multitude of individual friendly relationships between white women (and CR Fathers) and black children did keep doors open between the races, mitigating the divisive repercussions of urban segregation. Thus Raynes's successor could still say in the mid-1950's, 'The Sophiatown child is the most friendly creature on earth, and the most trusting.'[84]

c) From Settlement to Mission

Settlements in England made efforts to obtain for their worker neighbours improvements in housing and education. Ekutuleni found itself similarly impelled to social activism in a way that whites not actually resident in a township could not be. On the one hand, Dorothy Maud

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84 T. Huddleston, Naught for Your Comfort (London, 1957) (first pub. 1956), 99.

repeatedly stressed that fighting for justice for Africans helped to overcome that distrust which necessitated but also hindered peace-making. On the other, the theology of the World Call, the movement of missionary challenge to the Anglican Church in Britain in 1925-6 at the time of Maud's recruitment, gave social reform equal status with soul-saving in the Christianising of the world.[85]

Before the CR arrived, Maud battled, with Joint Council help, for a water supply for Sophiatown, which relied otherwise on water tanks or wells. In 1929 the Johannesburg City Council agreed to connect water to three stand-pipes in the suburb. Maud also lobbied for streetlights, as there were only six in all of Sophiatown and Western Native Township, though she discovered the £2,000 voted by the Council for lighting had not been used. By 1934, there were nine water taps and ninety street lamps.[86] Dorothy found the pushing behaviour required, distasteful, yet obviously realised that as a white person, a woman of impeccable respectability and class, with connections with the Joint Council network, she could make noises that would be heard. Getting the water involved 'a sickening amount of pulling strings and giving them no peace', she wrote home. 'I hate being an importunate spinster'.[87]

When Raynes joined Maud, they made a good team and, Mosley asserts, 'became known to a whole generation of Africans as white people who would

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85 Quoted in D. Hilliard, God's Gentlemen (St. Lucia, 1978), 259.

86 'Triomfville'; The Watchman (Dec. 1928, Dec. 1929); SWM Journal, (April 1944); EAR (1934). This local as opposed to national concern recalls English rather than American settlements. See Davis, Spearheads, passim., for American settlement involvement in campaigns against child labour, in local politics, women's trade unionism, municipal reform and the Progressive Party of 1912.

87 Maud newsletter, 17 Sept. 1929.

go to outstanding lengths to help them'. Raynes had been a curate in the slums of Bury and shared that sacramentalist view of social justice current in the inter-war period: 'If you find God in the Blessed Sacrament then you must find Him suffering in the slums, hungry in the streets, in prison, denied in factories and offices. The whole of life is sacramental.' Bishop Clayton aptly described Raynes as combining 'a burning passion for justice with an intense spirituality'.[88] Dorothy Maud's many personal connections with generous supporters in the city were a necessary complement to his stern masculine presence in the Johannesburg Joint Council and in altercations with the City Council. Within Sophiatown itself, both the priory and Ekutuleni had to cope with emergency needs: for a doctor, or protection from eviction, or financial crisis due to death, or a pass law arrest. Beyond that, the Mission was an ally of the 'steady' township residents. Maud rejoiced that by 1936 the local landowners were coming to trust them, and would discuss with her and Raynes how to keep down lawlessness in the streets. By the time the war came, the two of them were 'getting rents reduced, printing pamphlets, explaining the rent laws, encouraging Building Societies to give reasonable terms to freeholders'.[89]

Leseding's interaction with the municipal authorities was even greater than Ekutuleni's, because Orlando was a municipal location not a suburb like Sophiatown, and was also the new growth point for African housing in Johannesburg in the 1930's. LSE-trained social worker Margaret Leeke headed Leseding for thirteen years. She was, a fellow missionary affirmed, 'a fighter, and while lots of us dislike injustice and oppressions and do

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88 Mosley, Raynes, 72, 21, 126.

89 Maud newsletter, 5 Nov. 1936; Mosley, Raynes, 115; printed letter to English supporters, 1942.

nothing, she upped and did a great deal'.[90]

In September 1935 Margaret Leeke and Winifred Munton saw municipal officials several times in connection with lights for Orlando and their need of a bridge over the spruit which divided them from the location proper. By November there was a usable bridge, although the lights came only in May 1938, after three years' pressure. In 1936 the issue between them was the lowering of the Orlando rents. After 'much correspondence', the municipal Native Affairs chairman told them in February that this would be done; a Mr. Campbell promised action in March; Leeke and Maud saw Bertha Solomon, MP, about it in April, and in May the reductions were introduced, retrospective from August 1935. Persistent badgering of officials was clearly necessary and appeared to have results.[91] In 1939 Raynes clashed seriously in the press with the Council over the lack of sanitary and medical facilities in Orlando, an issue on which representatives of Orlando residents had held meetings late the previous year.

After a three-hour meeting with Leeke and Raynes at Leseding, Ballenden appointed a second doctor to the municipal clinic in Orlando, but publicly denied that it was due to Raynes's previous accusations. Leseding also tried hard to secure an adequate hygienic supply of milk to the township, but the lack of suitable storage places in shops was the stumbling block.[92]

The exigencies of the war years called for even greater social involvement. Margaret Leeke supervised the launching of Trevor Huddleston's African school feeding scheme in Orlando in 1944. That same year, because

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90 SWM Journal (Nov. 1948), 19.

91 See entries in Orlando Log for 6, 7, 9, 16 Sept. and 19 Nov. 1935, 19 May 1938, 18 Feb., 17 March, 3 and 9 April, and May 1936.

92 Orlando Log, 15 Sept. and 6 Oct. 1938, 14, 23 and 28 June 1939 and cuttings from the Star; also 11 Sept. 1939, 1 Jan., 13 July 1940.

they were living in Orlando, the missionaries of Leseding were caught up in the African squatter movement, but could conceive of responding only through charitable gestures: soup kitchens, the distribution of blankets, urging the Minister of Native Affairs to replace the shacks with solid shelters, and getting the university students to come and see for themselves and start 'knitting for Shanty Town'.[93] This in a sense confirms the limitations of the women's attempt at residential identification with African Christians. Their race, class and sex had made it hard for them to root themselves in the black urban community.

Only Toynbee Hall and one or two other settlements in England escaped becoming 'little more than modified missions' in the end, that is, having a specific denominational religious attachment and doing evangelistic as well as social and educational work. (American settlements, by contrast, sited in immigrant Catholic and Jewish neighbourhoods, underplayed church affiliation). Ekutuleni was no exception. The 'Settlement' label fell into disuse in the late 1930's and the work of the two Houses in conjunction with the CR was described as that of the 'Sophiatown and Orlando Missions'. Barnett contrasted the settlement aim of 'mutual acquaintance' with the mission's of 'conversion'. But both mattered for Ekutuleni from the start: one pamphlet spoke of the chapel as the intended centre of the House, whose 'sole object' would be to bring men and women to know Christ, 'the Lord of all good Life', while another rather stressed the House's social aims of uplift and making good citizens.[94]

Clubs and Wayfarers had been energetically promoted by Dorothy Maud

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93 Orlando Log, 1944, passim.

94 Davis, Spearheads, 15-16; Picht, Toynbee Hall, 3; A City Set on a Hill (1927) and Ekutuleni The Place of Peace (1928).

in the late 1920's, the decade when missionary enthusiasm for 'suitable' recreation for urban Africans was at its height in Johannesburg. By the mid-1930's, leisure provision was becoming more and more the province of African school teachers and the municipality. Already by 1940 Maud was suggesting handing Ekutuleni over to nuns, because the character of the work had changed; it had become 'almost purely pastoral' and 'needed to be safeguarded for the Church'. The change in terminology (from 'Settlement' to 'Mission') thus also reflected a shift in emphasis, from the social to the spiritual. Cooperation with the CR had probably contributed to this. For Dorothy Maud herself, on the verge of entering a religious community, it was the spiritual side which received emphasis in her farewell speech:

> For the creation of the new world of which so much was spoken, she said, the chief need was for greater numbers of converted people and greater practical reliance on the power of prayer.95

Couzens has succinctly described the role of liberals and Christians in the inter-war period as 'mediating (possibly ameliorating, but certainly conflict-avoiding)'.[96] The women missionaries of Ekutuleni and Leseding certainly saw themselves as mediators, go-betweens benefiting both black and white. Crowded nursery schools, day schools and church congregations indicate that the women were met by a positive response from at least some township Africans. Mediation which involved daily residence in an African area was something white South Africans resisted; only in the war years did some South African-born women take up residence. Ekutuleni and Leseding were settlements of expatriates by and large, which distinguishes

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95 Report for Synod 1936; Ekutuleni Mission Committee Minutes, 16 April 1940; Star, 9 Dec. 1943.

96 T. Couzens, 'The Social Ethos of Black Writing in South Africa 1920-1950', in C. Heywood (ed.), Aspects of South African Literature (London, 1976), 80.

them from their overseas counterparts where educated citizens mediated between classes in the interests of harmony. By their presence as township residents, the women could also ameliorate; in harrying the authorities on specific civic issues - the water supply, lights, rents, medical services - they spoke with added authority from personal knowledge, while their links with the community from which officials were drawn increased their leverage. But they could not ameliorate without conflict.

Undoubtedly, though, the women's humanitarian conflicts with local authorities were also designed to stave off that greater confrontation between black and white which the very conception of the settlements showed they feared. The social significance of their stance was that it conveyed to African adults, and especially to the rising generation of children, that the way to advance their cause with officials and to secure amenities for their community, was to depend on the mediation of sympathetic whites and the educable generosity of Johannesburg's wealthy citizens, rather than increase their own corporate strength and bargaining power. In this respect, Ekutuleni shares Legassick's characterisation of South African liberalism as 'a force trying on the one hand to minimise or disguise the conflictual and coercive aspects of the social structure, and on the other to convince selected Africans that the grievances they felt could be ameliorated through reforms which liberals could promulgate'.[97]

The great difficulty of socially concerned white Christians of that era, their vulnerability to criticism from both left and right, was expressed thus by one of them:

> They must work with [the] authorities whenever possible, but they must also stand over against

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97 Legassick, 'Liberalism', 1.

> them, retaining their right to criticise and to stand for the fundamental principles. They must urge moderation on the Africans who have been moderate for too long, and who have seen no fruits from that policy. They will almost certainly find themselves under fire from both sides.[98]

As Hastings recently reflected, 'the problems inherent in an effective dynamic of mediation are immense...It is almost impossible both to provide humanitarian aid to the weaker side, and be accepted as mediator by the stronger'.[99] Although the dilemma has not been solved for that group in contemporary South Africa, the Black Consciousness rejection of liberal mediation has reiterated, and brought home to some, the unacceptability of the privileged urging moderation on the oppressed. The structures which have kept the vast majority of white church members indifferent to African hardships through the same long period, largely retain their hold.

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98 A. H. Hunter, 'Housing for Africans in the Urban Areas', SWM Journal, (May 1946). Hunter married Joan Marshall, a Leseding worker.

99 A. Hastings, African Christianity (New York, 1976), 88.

EPILOGUE

The fate of the ventures discussed in Part III illustrates the changing nature of South African society and of relationships between black and white in the church after World War II.

The Anglican hostel closed in 1951, the Methodist in 1966, and the Helping Hand Club in 1970 because of the Group Areas Act. Residents could transfer to the municipal hostel at Orlando West. Thus that desire for urban residential segregation which had hindered the establishment of more church hostels in the 1920's, dealt the final blow to this type of philanthropic venture. The notoriously bleak regimentation of latter-day official women's hostels represents the true parallel culmination of the 'compound' tradition of controlling workers.

The stricter implementation of Group Areas also put paid to the township settlements. In 1956, the CSMV nuns left Leseding in Orlando. At this time, Sophiatown was being destroyed and its residents moved to Meadowlands in Soweto. By 1961, the nuns had left Ekutuleni. Sophiatown subsequently became the white suburb of Triomf. Thus, with this destruction of African freehold areas, it was now legally impossible, where previously it had simply been difficult, for white missionaries to live in the same districts as urban Africans.

The relatively close contact between black and white mission Christians, which had been embodied in youth work no less than in settlements, came to an end in these decades too. The demise of Wayfarers as an organisation with inter-racial leadership was partly due to the retirement of the generation of missionary women who had taken such an interest in the association. Thus in 1964 an African Organising Secretary replaced Florence

Brown's successor. The waning prominence of church hostels can be accounted for similarly to some extent. But the GWA finally advanced black women to its highest offices in 1973 to conform with government policy. Financial assistance to the organisation was dependent on its being an African-run movement, although a white advisory committee was permitted.

The increasing separation of the races from the 1940's onwards was equally evident in the prayer unions explored in Part II. Here, the growing autonomy of African Christians in general was central, rather than state action. These were the years when 'the mission' became 'the church'. The separate sphere which women Christians had evolved, was consolidated on racial lines. Transvaal Methodist Manyano women became more closely associated than before with the Manyano in the rest of South Africa. From 1947 national triennial conferences were held, and the movement had close on a hundred thousand members throughout the country by the 1950's. The Johannesburg Isililo members similarly strengthened their links in the late forties with the stronger movement in the Natal heartland of the American Board Mission. Only in the Anglican Church was there a renewed effort at inter-racialism in the 1950's, associated with the bishop's wife, Mrs. Reeves. Brandel-Syrier portrays the manyanos in that decade as estranged from both white women and black men, and guarding their independence jealously. There have been recent moves in all three churches of this study to increase women's inter-racial contact.[1] Nevertheless, the distinctive revivalist ethos which prayer unions developed before World War I has proved very enduring. There is little

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1 While in Johannesburg in 1977-8, I attended large multiracial rallies of Congregational Churchwomen, the Combined Methodist Women's Fellowship and the Mothers' Union. In all, 'Coloured' women were noteworthy mediators between white and African, but the women still very much stuck together in racial groups.

sign of manyanos moving closer to white models of church women's organisations.

The progressive drawing apart of white and black mission women (and white women and black children) which followed the War, serves to highlight the special nature of the twenties and thirties on the Witwatersrand. By 1939, the heyday of inter-racial cooperation in the cities had passed.

APPENDIX I

APPLICATION FORM, SPG WOMEN CANDIDATES' DEPARTMENT

1. Place and date of birth.
2. What is your home address?
3. Are your parents living? What is or was your father's profession?
4. Give the date of your baptism. Where possible, please send the baptismal certificate.
5. Who prepared you for confirmation? Who confirmed you? Give the date.
6. What has been your usual practice about your Communions since your confirmation?
7. Where were you educated? Give names of Schools or Colleges, if any, and dates.
8. What have you done since you left School? Where have you lived? Give dates.
9. What examinations have you passed? What, if any, professional qualifications have you? Medical, Educational, Industrial, Technical? What certificates do you hold?
10. Have you facility in learning languages? What languages have you studied?
11. What general subjects chiefly interest you, such as social work, art and music, literature, outdoor work?
12. What experience have you had in work for the Church? Diocesan, parochial or otherwise.
13. Are you engaged to be married? Are you free from any other home obligation?
14. Are you willing to take a course of special Missionary preparation?
15. Have you (a) any provision for sickness or old age; (b) any financial difficulty or obligation?
16. To what extent would it be necessary for you to depend on the Society for your expenses during the time of Missionary preparation and service overseas? N.B. - No Candidate is refused solely for lack of means.
17. Give the names and addresses of clergymen and other friends to whom you are well known, and some referees as to your professional work. (Not fewer than two clergymen and two women, and not more altogether than six) Please give, in addition, two women references as to health.
18. Have you belonged to any Guild or Union for Missionary preparation?
19. Have you applied before to this or any other Missionary Society? What has led you specially to offer through S.P.G.?
20. Is there any particular country in which you are interested?
21. What led you to offer yourself for Missionary work overseas?

22. (a) Have you any plan with regard to regular reading of the Bible?
(b) Have you made special study of any particular books of the Bible?

23. Name books you have read on (a) The Bible; (b) The Prayer Book;
(c) Church Doctrine; (d) Church History.

24. State as briefly and simply as possible what you understand by -
(a) Sin; (b) The Atonement; (c) The Work of the Holy Spirit;
(d) The Church; (e) The Sacraments.

APPENDIX 2

A DAY AT A PRAYER UNION CONFERENCE IN BOKSBURG IN 1929

Mrs. Mohau started proceedings on the second day of the Conference by two hymns & prayer in the fore-noon. She then announced that Committee was to meet & make arrangements for revival Service round the Location. Prayers would be said in front of the Bioscope Hall, and the revival would wind up with a service in the Church. Interval.

At 3 P.M. Mrs. Nyati lead the singing in hymn 86 - and preached from Matthew Chapter 13 Verse 34 - The parable of the mustard seed. Mrs. Nontsontwa lead singing in hymn 286 3 members prayed. Interval.

8 pm Preacher was Mrs. Molefe. Her text was Ephesians Chapter 4 Verse 1. Mrs. Malusi also preached about St. Paul. Support by Mrs. Kumalo. Mrs. Nkomo (of the Anglicans) also supported and mentioned that co-operation is necessary for good results to the different Prayer Unions. Mrs. Jama (of the Wesleyans) also spoke. The A.M.E. was represented by a Mrs. Magosi in the proceedings. Mrs. Ratseu also preached on St. Paul. Mrs. Soni & Mrs. Nyangana both complained of the wayward habits of their children & asked the Conference's assistance in prayer. Prayers and hymns by Mrs. Sigwana, Mrs. Nyati and Mrs. Ratseu. Mrs. Zose was elected bell-ringer. Interval.

Service for the sick was held, and names were given of those who were unable to attend. Mrs. Sigwana supported by Mrs. Nyati preached from St. John Chapter 3 Verses 1 to 7. Jesus said to Nicodemus:- Verily, verily I say unto you unless a man be born again etc. Mrs. Ngayi (A.M.E.) & Mrs. Maklele also preached on the same text, so did Mrs. Ngqiniso AME & Mrs. Bhusakwe (Ang.).

Second day of Conference ends.

From: Cory Library, MS 15 854, 'Primitive Wesleyan Church & Native Women's Prayer Union. Annual Conference held at Stirtonville Boksburg on Wednesday 25th September 1929 to Sunday 29/9/29. Report', signed by M. Gwele, Secretary.

APPENDIX 3

A WEEK AT A METHODIST MANYANO CONVENTION IN MAFEKING IN 1937

PROGRAMME

Monday, March 29th

9:45 a.m. Train leaves Park Station, Johannesburg.
7:41 p.m. Train arrives Mafeking.

Tuesday, March 30th

6:00 a.m. Prayer-meeting, Sisters Swartland and Mahlamvu.
9:30 a.m. Opening of Convention.
Roll Call.
President's Address.
Reception of Shilling Fund.
3:00 p.m. Public Reception of Delegates.
A few words of Welcome will be given by:
The Mayor: C. J. Truscott, Esq.
Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Dick.
Dr. S. H. Molema.
Chief Sotlamoreng Montsoia.
Rev. J. P. Lund.
Rev. L. T. Sadler, etc.

Wednesday, March 31st

6:00 a.m. Prayer-meeting, Sisters Mdebuka and Lushaba.
9:30 a.m. District Executive Committee.
10:00 a.m. Open-air Evangelistic Service, conducted by Lay Delegates.
3:00 p.m. Memorial Service. Sister H. D. Hlabangane.
7 p.m. Evangelistic Service in Church.

Thursday, April 1st

6 a.m. Prayer-meeting. Sisters Mokapela and Mngadi.
8 a.m. Young Women's Class, President.
10 a.m. Temperance Meeting, Rev. L. T. Sadler, D. S. H. Molema.
3 p.m. Visit of Local European Women's Auxiliary, (President, Mrs. Dick.)
7:30 p.m. Meeting for "blousing" New Members. Address: Rev. A. S. More.

Friday, April 2nd

6 a.m. Prayer-meeting, Sisters Mokoena and Moroke.
10 a.m. Young Women's Testimony Meeting.
3 p.m. Evangelistic Service.
7:30 p.m. Service of Thanksgiving and Praise.

Saturday, April 3rd

6 a.m. Prayer-meeting, Sisters Mahabane and Weyi.
7:30 p.m. Great Public Meeting.
Chairman: Rev. E. Bottrill, (Chairman of the District).
Rev. J. P. Lund.
Dr. S. H. Molema.

Sunday, April 4th

6 a.m.	Prayer-meeting, Sisters Mashiyane and Mapumlo.
11 a.m.	Rev. E. Bottrill.
3 p.m.	Sacramental Service. (Members only). Conducted by Rev. E. Bottrill.
7 p.m.	Rev. Abel S. More.

From: Cory Library, MS 15 855, Methodist Church, Transvaal. African Women's Prayer & Service Union (Manyano-Kopano). Annual Convention Mafeking March 29th to April 4th 1937.

TABLES

Note to Tables 1-12 on Johannesburg's Women Missionaries

Such a profile is not easy to construct. There are technical difficulties, first of all, about who counts as a missionary. If I included for the Anglicans only those women who went through the channels of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the important pioneers in medical work and most of the staff at the township settlements would be omitted. If only single women financially supported as individuals by the ABM and the Methodists qualify, we neglect the years of service and leadership given by the wives of missionaries. If the intention to serve for a five-year term is the criterion, women who nevertheless left the Anglican work after a year or two would be included while intended temporary workers at the settlements, who stayed a similar short time, would, inconsistently, be excluded. Thus for the two smaller mission staffs, I have included the single women appointees as well as the wives of male missionaries to Africans, while for the Anglicans, women listed in SPG records and others mentioned either in correspondence or in reports of the Sophiatown and Orlando missions.

Further difficulties arise because of the unevenness of data, a problem already encountered by those who have written whole theses on missionary candidates. Nearly a third of the Anglican women filled in SPG application forms, making possible comparisons among them on relevant details such as their age at offering, father's occupation, previous education, employment and church work, and, in some cases, motivation. For some of the rest, some of these details have been gleaned from scattered references in various sources and my personal enquiries, but for a few, only the name and dates of service are known. In the case of the seven ABM women, full dossiers on all have been preserved. Information is thinnest for the Methodists. No candidates' papers appear to have been filled out by either single women or wives. A few random references and some personal enquiries have furnished all I know.

TABLE 1

WOMEN MISSIONARIES IN JOHANNESBURG, 1903-39

	Single	Wives
Anglican Church	80+	0
Methodist Church	4	7
American Board Mission	2	5
	86	12
Overall Total	98	

+This includes two widows

TABLE 2

LOCATION DESIRED BY SPG WOMEN

Area	Number
South Africa	9
Africa	2
China	3
India	3
Japan	2
Singapore	1
Esquimaux (sic)	1
Total	21

TABLE 3

AGE OF SINGLE WOMEN ON MISSIONARY APPLICATION

Age	Number
20-24	2
25-29	9
30-34	11
35-39	4
40-44	3
	29
Unknown	33

TABLE 4

FATHER'S OCCUPATION

Occupation	Anglican	Methodist	ABM
Clergyman	15	1	
Missionary	1		2
Lawyer	3		
Navy Captain	1		
Chartered Accountant	1		
Clerical & Financial	4		
Farmer	2		
Tradesman	6	1	2
Mill Worker		1	
Unknown	47	8	3

TABLE 5

EDUCATION

	Anglican	Methodist	ABM
Elementary school	1	1	
Governess	3		
High school (no known exams)	2	1	2
University entrance exams+	6 (+3)		
Teacher training++	12		1 (+1)
Bachelor's degree/College	2 (+1)		3 (+1)
Medicine	4		
Nursing training	3 (+1)		1
Unknown	47	9	

Figures in brackets refer to women enumerated in another category.

+ Cambridge Higher Local, Senior Oxford Local, London Matric.

++ Including training to teach domestic science, nursery school, music and needlework.

TABLE 6

PRIOR OCCUPATION

	Anglican	Methodist	ABM
Missionary or church worker	12	1	
Teacher	9 (+4)		1
At home/housewife	6	1	3
Doctor	4		
Nurse	3 (+1)		1
Social worker/librarian/ church needlework	3		
Dressmaker		1	1
Shop assistant			1
Maid	1		
Unknown	42	8	

TABLE 7

PREVIOUS CHURCH WORK

Sunday school	23
Religious youth movements	19
Mission/parish/deaconess appointment	13
Visiting	7
Produced/wrote religious drama	3
Mothers' meetings, Mothers' Union	2
Collecting	2
Rescue work, moral welfare work	2
Open air mission	1
Public speaking for missions	1

Note: Several women had experience of more than one of the activities listed.

TABLE 8

MISSIONARY TRAINING: SINGLE WOMEN

	Anglicans	Methodists	ABM
Deaconess	3	1	
SPG Hostel	5		
Community House	14		
College of the Ascension	5		
Other	1	1	
None	4		2
Unknown	48	2	

TABLE 9

REASON FOR TERMINATING JOHANNESBURG MISSIONARY APPOINTMENT

	Anglicans	Methodists	ABM
Ill-health	8		
Marriage	7	1	
Transfer other mission/church	6	4	1
Test vocation as nun	5		
Family claims	4	1	
Dismissed; retrenched; resigned	4	2	3
Death	3		
Retirement	1	3	3
Unknown	18		

Note: The 24 intended temporary workers at Ekutuleni have been excluded.

TABLE 10

SUBSEQUENT FATE OF SINGLE WOMEN MISSIONARIES

Other mission/church-related work	25
Wife	15
Nun	4
Other	3
Died during Johannesburg appointment	3
Unknown	36

Note: The 12 married women have been excluded.

TABLE 11

LENGTH OF JOHANNESBURG SERVICE

Years	Anglican	Methodist[+]	ABM
0-1	29	3	
2-5	29		1
6-10	9	1	1
11-15	7	3	
16-20	4[++]	4	3
21-25	1		
26-30	1		1
31-35			
36-40			1

[+] Work by four women for the Transvaal Manyano while based outside Johannesburg has been included.
[++] Part-time for one, a South African schoolteacher.

TABLE 12

DIVISION OF WORK

Type of Work	Anglican	Methodist	ABM
Educational	20	1	1
Medical	7		1
Spiritual work with women	13	5	3
Evangelistic and social work with children and young people	40	5	2

TABLE 13

AFRICANS IN JOHANNESBURG

Year	Males	Females
1896	12,961	1,234
1904	55,765	3,840
1911	97,614	4,357
1921	102,960	12,160
1936	168,130	60,992

From: Fourie, 'Koms'; Union of South Africa, Third Census of the Population of the Union of South Africa, enumerated 3rd May, 1921, Report (Pretoria, 1924), Table CCCXXVII; Sixth Census...5th May, 1936, Vol. IX, Natives (Bantu) and other Non-European Races (Pretoria, 1942), xiii.

TABLE 14

BIRTHPLACE OF AFRICAN FEMALES IN TRANSVAAL URBAN AREAS

	1911	%	1936	%
Transvaal	14,474	58.95	100,876	65.74
Cape	4,842	19.72	15,867	10.34
Natal	1,944	7.92	10,729	6.99
OFS	1,439	5.86	15,826	10.31
Basutoland	805	3.28	6,471	4.22
Mozambique	302	1.23	302	.19
Swaziland	326	1.33	2,164	1.41
Elsewhere	421	1.71	1,202	.78
	24,553		153,437	

From: Census of the Union of South Africa 1911, Part VII; 1936 Census, Vol. IX, Table 12 (ii).

TABLE 15

TRANSVAAL METHODIST MANYANO MEMBERSHIP 1921-39

Year	Full Members	On Trial	Total
1921	2,791	509	3,300
1922			3,459
1923	3,378	523	3,901
1924	3,954	741	4,695
1925	4,217	874	5,091
1926	4,550	962	5,512
1927	4.797	808	5,605
1928	4,860	899	5,795
1929	5,244	924	6,168
1930			
1931	5,025+		
1932	6,130+		
1933	5,450	791	6,241
1934	5,629	889	6,518
1935	6,344	888	7,232
1936	6,454+		
1937	7,869+		
1938			
1939	7,564	1,116	8,680

From: WMDT (1922-3), 42; (1923-4), 52; (1925-6), 43; (1926-7), 35; (1927-8), 29; (1928-9), 30; (1929-30), 29; (1930-31), 50; MMS 347, Synod Minutes 1924, 9; Cory Library MS 15 855,...Membership Returns 1933 (corrected totals) and ...Annual Returns 1935 (minus numbers for Portuguese East Africa); Cory Library, Pams 2, Synod...1935...Report by K. Kidwell; TM (Sept. 1939), 15. Those marked + are provided for lack of alternatives, from Minutes of Conference (1932), 222-3; (1933), 222-3; (1936), 248-9; (1937), 244-5. The latter seems particularly suspect; but for none of the years where I have both Conference and Transvaal Manyano returns do the figures tally. Figures for the 1930's are so incomplete because WMDT ceased publication in 1931, while Prayer Union reports appeared in the Synod Agenda (not traced) but not in the Minutes until 1939.

TABLE 16

METHODIST MANYANO BRANCH MEMBERSHIP, WITWATERSRAND

Branch	1933		1940	
	Full	On Trial	Full	On Trial
Albert Street	106	35	164	10
Alexandra	90	9	200	25
Benoni	114	13	232	10
Boksburg	84	7	87	22
Fordsburg	130	18	133	20
Germiston	118	15	222	19
Krugersdorp	121	20	191	9
New Comet	25	15	-	-
Pimville (Nancefield)	135	7	288	23
Randfontein	95	13	138	19
Roodepoort	90	4	95	15
Sophiatown	104	6	173	7
Spes Bona	123	21	148	23
Springs	187	32	234	60
Total Reef	1,737		2,567	
Total Transvaal	6,241		9,421	
Reef as % of Transvaal	27.83		27.25	

From: Membership Returns 1933 and Central Methodist Church, Johannesburg, South-Western Transvaal District Office, Synod Minutes 1940, Manyano Financial Statement and Membership Returns.

TABLE 17

TRANSVAAL METHODIST MANYANO CONVENTIONS 1909-1939

Year	Venue	Delegates
1909	Potchefstroom	
1910		
1911	Johannesburg	200
1912	Krugersdorp	150
1913		
1914		
1915	Mahamba	250
1916		
1917		
1918		
1919		
1920	Evaton	600
1921	Krugersdorp	
1922	Mafeking	
1923	Makapanstad	531
1924	Mahamba	250
1925	Potchefstroom	183
1926	Germiston	
1927	Krugersdorp	215
1928	Mafeking	200+
1929	Nancefield	212
1930	Barberton	
1931	Heidelberg	200+
1932		
1933	Pretoria	300
1934	Witbank	150
1935	Springs	169
1936		
1937	Mafeking	
1938	Sophiatown	
1939	Germiston	175

From: FF (Oct. 1911), 55, (April 1913), 251-2, (Feb. 1916), 132, (Sept. 1921), 231; MMS 347, S/M 1925, 8; WMDT (1924-5), 48; 1926-7 and 1928-31 as for Table 15; TM (Nov. 1931), 18; (Nov. 1933), 4; (Dec. 1934), 6; (June 1938), 4; (May 1939); Annual Returns 1935. Note that up to 1932 these are figures for Wesleyan Methodists. It appears that no convention was held in 1936 because the month was changed from October to March or April, the 1937 convention being the first held at the new time of just after Easter.

TABLE 18

TRANSVAAL METHODIST YOUNG WOMEN'S MANYANO MEMBERSHIP

Year	Full Members	On Trial	Total
1923	273		
1924	279	269	548
1925	248	372	620
1926	288	396	684
1927	302	417	719
1928	426	487	913
1929	374	475	849
1930			
1931			
1932			
1933	464	617	1,081
1934	421	726	1,147
1935	436	718	1,154
1936			
1937			
1938			
1939	777	267	1,044

TABLE 19

METHODIST YOUNG WOMEN'S MANYANO BRANCH MEMBERSHIP, WITWATERSRAND

Branch	1933		1940	
	Full	On Trial	Full	On Trial
Albert Street	16	1	33	5
Alexandra	12	3	4	1
Benoni	8	3	17	6
Boksburg	4	13	1	1
Fordsburg	21	3	8	6
Germiston	12	10	31	2
Krugersdorp	18	10	16	6
New Comet	1	6	-	-
Pimville (Nancefield)	3	30	7	-
Randfontein	12	1	10	30
Roodepoort	2	4	-	15
Sophiatown	6	23	16	4
Spes Bona	21	4	27	2
Springs	17	26	7	22
Total Reef	290		277	
Total Transvaal	1,085		1,655	
Reef as % of Transvaal	26.73		16.74	

From: Tables 18 and 19 same sources as Tables 15 and 16 respectively.

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VI INTERVIEWS

Conducted 1977-8, in Johannesburg unless otherwise stated. Only the most significant are listed.

Miss R. Allcock, London. Daughter of Transvaal Manyano President and herself involved in Wayfarers.

Mrs. M. Brandel-Syrier. Researched prayer unions in the 1950's.

Miss F. Brown. Former Methodist missionary and Wayfarer Organising Secretary.

Miss F. Chilton, Bloemfontein. Former Anglican missionary.

Miss J. Emery. Mothers' Union Worker.

Dr. E. Hellmann. Researched Johannesburg African women in the 1930's.

Rev. L. Hewson, Grahamstown. Church historian, originally from the Reef.

Mesdames D. Hlongwana, M. Matsinya and A. Ntsamai, Roodepoort. Methodist Biblewomen.

Miss C. Lawrance, London. Former Ekutuleni missionary.

Mrs. C. Makhene. Wife of minister in African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Mrs. L. Masebi and Mrs. W. Qupe, Evaton. Members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church's women's association since the 1920's and 1930's.

Mrs. N. Mguli. Anglican minister's widow; has lived in Johannesburg area since 1934.